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LADY CLAUDINE;

OR,

THE DOUBLE MARRIAGE.

A DRAMATIC TALE.

BY DR. MORATO W. NELSON.

CHAPTER I.

It is in an apartment of almost regal luxury and splendor that the first scene of our story opens. The room is lofty and richly painted—both ceiling and walls—with the most exquisite productions of the pencils of Parisonian decorative artists; and at intervals between the gilded pilasters, that divided the beautiful walls into panels, were filled up with paintings that the creative genius of Claude Lorraine, Vandyke, Michael Angelo and Rubens had produced in their happiest hours of inspiration and of power. Statues so, both heroic and beautiful in construction, and that only needed the breath of life and the grace of motion, adorned the niches and corners of the noble hall. The tables, lounges and fauteuils were covered with cloth of gold, and beneath the feet was laid a carpet that seemed to the eye a bed of gorgeous flowers, and to the footfall gave back not the slightest sound. A soft, golden light mingled with rose-colored and orange tints from curtains of Persian dyes, woven by wonderful art with figures of Feri sporting amid fountains, in paradisal gardens, filled the whole interior of this gorgeous room, which was not all the gold of Golconda, nor the pearls of India, nor the diamonds of Golkonda would have made more beautiful and glorious. If a simple peasant boy had been taken from his humble cot blindfolded, and transported thither in his sleep, he would, on waking, have believed himself in a dream; one of those beautiful dreams in which even childhood, and poverty, and ignorance are mysteriously visited, as if our sad memories revealed only in sleep a part of a former happy state in some unknown and beautiful place, ere they were born into this; and of which these delightful dreams are but broken and fragmentary recollections.

And, as if in such a dream, a peasant lad is now within this superb apartment, standing like a statue of wonder with clasped hands and eyes and ears wandering from object to object. He thinks he dreams. But he is now awake; but with he was always was taken from his rude home to awake and find himself here. He remains in this fixed attitude a few minutes, while the expression of his face, brown but ruddy with health and rustic beauty, is that of awe and bewildered helplessness; the moment he advances a step as if he would cross the room, and then draws quickly back, as he seems to shod fest, as he sees that he is about to place them upon gorgeous pictures, interwaigh with all the superb enrichments of needle-work, into the tapestried carpet which covered the floor. He had never before trod upon any other than the rude earth or green grass of his native plains: never before gazed upon pictures and statues. Lofty women fair as Helen looked down upon him from eye that never met his; and whose step-within marble forms seemed to him the actual presence of reigns from the unseen world. Above his head the ceiling expanded, vaulted and azure like the sky, and shone with golden stars like those which rose and set over his native plain. All so strange before him, through a door ajar into an apartment rich with purple, enamel and gold, appeared like gorgeous drawing-room. It is a lady's boudoir, and furnished with luxurious taste. A subdued, dreamy, golden hue, rather than light, floated over the level beams of the evening sun that pierced like envoys between the openings between the folds of the muscin silk, which curtained the windows in which thousand glorious and strangely formed flowers of the most delicious perfume; flowers born and nurtured under a tropic sun, but which would and will had survived to be the ornaments of the boudoir in our story opens in Bath, England, and in a palatial abode, one of the most magnificent and royally appointed in that city of modern luxury and pleasure.

In the elegant and comfortable little inner-room sat a lady of rare beauty. Her oval and artistocratic face was supported in her hand, which had the softness and semi-transparency of those beautiful hands one sees painted with a dainty pencil upon the purest ivory. The lady was not more than three and twenty. Dark as night was her hair, and her eyes were of that brown tint of the oak-leaf when it falls in autumn. The eyelids drooped over them like exquisite rose-tinted shells, and were fringed by long brown lashes that would have black but for a bright chestnut-colored light that touched them gold-like.

Her attitude was that of one sad and unhappy; her peace does not always dwell in gorgeous halls, nor in the heat that beats sensibly without bodies always light and joyous. Tears were trembling in her eyes, and by one gorgeous lamp falling gems and shivered into glittering fragments upon a burning diamond that glittered upon her bosom.

But she was not alone. The cause of her sorrow was apparent in the presence there of a dark man, who paced to and fro before the table by which she sat with her face supporting her head, and her hand enabling her cheek. He was well dressed, though as if just from a journey. He had a bold and resolute face, with large, handsome eyes, and a step and carriage thoroughbred and firm: yet there was a look of dissipation—of reckless dissolution—stamped upon his features that betrayed a soul within which had lost the dignity of independence and self-control, and was the slave of the passions of the body.

He was now in a high state of anger. Turning, in his walk up and down the velvet carpet, he stopped full before the beautiful and sorrowful lady, and with three quick steps upon her and a sneer upon his thinly cut upper lip, he said, sternly:—

"And you refuse, Claudine?"

Her only reply was an almost imperceptible shaking of the head.

"Love me?" he exclaimed, with terrible scorn, "you love me! I have been mocked, and fooled, and blinded! Your profession of love were all false! If you cared for me you would spare me the disgrace that awaits me! You would make any sacrifice for me!"

"Anything, anything, Brindley—anything, my husband, but to put my hand to crime! Ah said, firmly but mournfully; and raising her brimful, tearful, beautiful eyes to his face with a momentary glance of fear and love blended with pity, she bowed her forehead upon her moulded arm and wept, with a profundness of grief that would have moved the heart of any one that hated her—if one so lovely, and evidently so truthful and good, could be hated by any—but rather only loved by all!

Her husband's eyes did not catch that timid glance, for he had turned away to pace the carpet, biting his mouth with vexation. Again he paused abruptly before her.

"Crime! is it crime for a wife to save her husband? Ought not a woman to make any sacrifice—"

"Brindley, so I would do, were it in my power to make any. I would make any sacrifice to save you in your present extremity!"

"Make it then! It is a mere scratch of the pen!"

"No, no! I cannot do forgery, even to save your honor, now so fearfully compromised by you—but I will not reproach you. I pity, and would aid, you even with the cheerful surrender of my life, could it avail!"

"You may have to sur——"

Here he checked himself, and colored high, and then growing intensely white, he turned his back upon her and strove to say, with a laugh—and a strange laugh it was, but she was not the face beggared and desperate from the bitterness of which it knew—"you may have to suffer—you suffer—I meant to say—if I am—entangled!"

The poor lady shuddered, but did not raise her head from out of her hand.

"Yes, Brindley, oh, yes she, you would become a widow! young, rich, beautiful! Earls and lords, and barons, would sigh at your feet—so they would or sigh at your feet! Don't hope too sanguinely! They would not need the widow of a bagged man! Hey, Claudine?"

"Brindley, this is so much! I claim from you protection!" she said, rising and speaking with dignity, but shaking all over like an aspen-leaf, every nerve of her body unstrung and trembling with the keenness of the insult, not only of these words he had just spoken, but of others that he had uttered before we entered the boudoir.

"Protection! nay I claim it from you!" I have, in order to save you from disgrace in these halls of Bath, well named they are, forged your name to papers for thirty thousand pounds! They were debts of honor, due to noblemen with whom I play, and they must have been paid; for when debts of honor are in question, it is either pay or pistols placed at one's temples and a suicide's grave! Trusting to your love, your—your—Claudine—trusting to your clemency, I drew, in your name, upon your bankers. The drafts were honored! My debts of honor were paid! And lo! because again I drew in your brother's name, for eight thousand pounds on his banker, you even so count being overdrawn, your resentment is up! using your name and money without leave, leads you to refuse me aid, now that the money on the forged draft must be replaced by me, before your brother is aware that it has been taken out; and he will be sure to know it to-morrow, as that is the day of the month when the sheep-ruffles his book account!"

"How could you risk your honor, Brindley, so desperately? I cared not for the loss of my own money; I only regretted and mourned that you should have dishonored it by a crime!"

"A crime, for a husband to use his wife's name?" said Captain Brindley Oakes, with a sneer. "This is news to me!"

"I will not argue the point; I forgive you! and what greater proof of my love and forgiveness, than my scanning for signatures and shielding you when the presiding officer of the bank called on me the next day, with the checks, and asked me if I had lately authorized any large a draft in your favor! Ignorant, as I was, of your having drawn at all, and alive at once to the peril you were exposed to if I denied the signature, I tacitly answered him that I authorized the draft's meaning that does I authorized them, and so saved you from the further suspicions which his inquiries of me had aroused, and already had begun to lead to in the minds of the bankers."

"Confound them! How dare they suspect a gentleman!"

"But the amount was so large, Brindley—and then you know that——"

"Cut—cut! I have the reputation of losing large sums at play, and being a spendthrift! The less follows! to suspect a gentleman."

"Brindley, so I would do, were it in my power to make any. I would make any sacrifice to save you in your present extremity!"

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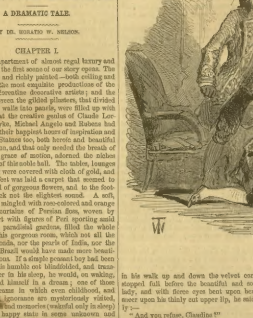

CAPTAIN OAKES HUNTING AN OLD SERVANT TO TERMS.

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placing the palm of his hand firmly over her lips, and with the other he fiercely motioned the boy to be still. But scuffled, he battled with the pen held in his hand. Captain Oakes then drew from his pocket a small Italian stiletto, and menacing him with it, cried—

"Write that name, or you shall die!"

The lad, pale at death, placed the pen to the paper, when Chandlee, extricating herself from her husband's grasp, sprang forward, dashed the pen out of the boy's grasp, seized upon the draft and tore it in pieces!

"Thus do I save you, poor boy, from a forgery, and you, sir," she added, turning to her cruel husband, "from another murder! "from a crime darker and more unpitiable than all others that have gone before."

"To defy me thus, woman!" he shouted, with the ferocity of a tiger. "Your own life shall pay the penalty!"

He made a half movement towards her as if he intended to bury the steel in her bosom; but suddenly arrested himself, as if prompted by some quick passing reflection, and returning the dagger to his bosom, he muttered—

"No—not now—not thus! You may thank yourself, madam, for this rage; but you have gone too far; you have presumed too much!"

"I could not and would not, sir, see this innocent boy involved, as I perceived he must be, if he signed that paper! Nor, sir, could I permit you to be the author of another fatal error. What I have done, I justify myself for doing; and would perform the same act again!"

"Madam, you shall rue this hour!"

"I have you fellow to love, Captain Oakes, as to threaten a woman, and that woman your wife!"

"You may scorn me, but I am used against all your scorn. For this, your last act, I will make you severely feel!" But, mark me: I will be none mean have this money to replace when belongs to your brother Charles, though I were to go to the ends of the earth for it!"

The saying the defiant and foiled man turned away with a brow that might have matched that of Lucifer, when, with unslackened and hasty step, he loaded back upon the gates of Paradise, out of which he had been hurled. He left the brother the innocence of the sister, and for the time he was not sure so low but that he was keenly sensible to the humility of the exposure of his profligate life and irremovable truth and unstained honor of his wife.

When the dismal door of the prison closed upon him, the wretched wife, whose hopes were crushed and peace she felt were now irrevocably wrecked, fell upon the seat from which she had sometime before arisen, and burying her face in her jeweled hands, wept bitterly.

As the departing gaoneer seemed to forget, in the distress of his anger and the confusion of his defeat, to lock the door of the cell behind him, as she seemed in the depth of her grief that he was present.

He remained gazing upon her with wonder. What might to be wanted, to be done in a few brief minutes, more misery and guilt and sorrow than he had ever witnessed in all his life in his varied career? The terrible scenes where the profoundest passions of our nature are aroused as from the crater of a long-quiescent volcano, are not known in the peaceful homes of shepherds, whose quiet days pass by unmarked and unseen. Reuben could not comprehend all this! Not only was he bewildered at being there, but alarmed at the accidents which passed before him. He saw that you can describe the depth of wretchedness of the young and wealthy and beautiful wife. Only now was she fully assured that her husband, through his vices and the crimes to which they had conducted, to sustain his credit, imagined by these vices was lost to her forever! She felt she could no longer live a man who hesitated at no crime to patch up his false and rotten honor in the eyes of men! As well might one criminal as a highminded gentleman continue to extend his friendship and confidence, where he knew they were no longer merited on account of the crimes of his friend, as for a gem-polished, proud and honorable wife to continue to regard with love and trust a husband who had only done the acts of, but had not hesitated to acknowledge himself a villain! The dagger of shame and pride fallen, pierced her soul more sharply than the steel he had just plunged into and would have pierced her heart.

Sobbing, as if carried away by the impulse of her emotions she sprung to her feet, as if it were in a sort of phrensy. The sight of the shepherd boy, his unlucky but honest face, which now fell on her wonder, and of pity for her, arrested her eyes.

"And he would have brought me the last piece of his life! This was the truest act of all! Oh, Brumley, how are these to be? Do you wish to go back to the plains and to your flock, boy?" she said, subduing her feelings and addressing him in a kindly voice.

"Oh, yes! I do not know where I be. I thought I was a-dreaming and had come up to the gates of heaven, everything looks so gold and beautiful like! But I found 'e beard 'e had got out of the wood, and of pity for her, arrested her eyes.

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"Oh, yes! I do not know where I be. I thought I was a-dreaming and had come up to the gates of heaven, everything looks so gold and beautiful like! But I found 'e beard 'e had got out of the good Queen would un keep so much wicked folk there, an' he so much dreadful like!"

"No wonder you don't think it the good queen's palace, poor lad, coming upon such scenes as you have just witnessed," said Chandlee, in a hearty sigh. "Also, it was not to carry from earth to Heaven such pestilence as you have found here. It will not be any more Heaven to us, than this place of splendor is a palace to you. What is your name?"

"Reuben."

"You shall go home again! But let me ask you to make me a promise?"

"What be 'ee?" asked the boy, frankly and bluntly—but only the blunt frankness of a rustic, who has never been taught the conventionalities of artificial life.

"I am a poor lady, and live in this palace?"

"Poor?" and the boy's dark features was rendered over the gorgeous appointments. "Poor, and all this grand thing?"

"Yes. I am poorer than you are, Reuben; for you have peace and happiness. All my gold cannot buy them!"

"No wonder who had be, if you do not know. What I wish you to promise me is, that you wont speak to anybody about it. Don't say you have seen or heard anything here! Here is a piece of gold. Keep it and buy your books; and don't say more words than needful—Accept it, and promise me you promise?"

"Yes. I'll do everything you tell me to?"

"Answer no questions they may ask you."

"Who?"

"The people—anybody down stairs."

"Why I ask how I coomed hereby?"

"Yes, you were brought here in carriage asleep. I will give orders to have you taken back again."

Here Chandlee rang, and a footman in superb livery of gold and green responded to the bell.

"Stephenson, conduct this lad to the box where the coach starts that goes home to Salisbury. Pay his passage, and see him off before you come away. He is one of my brother's tenants on Salisbury plains; and the coachman will leave him there when he comes to his home thereon. Your fortune, good evening; and remember your promise."

The shepherd's lad re-asserting his natural love his intention to keep it, followed the footman from the boudoir, and with him took the direction to the servants' hall.

CHAPTER II.

"Well, what think'st 'ee, lad an' ye there, Stephenson?" asked the steward, as the footman led Reuben, the shepherd's lad, past the door of this splendid apartment as he passed.

"A lad from my lady's brother's sheep cotes on the plains, who is to go to the poor-house home!"

"Ha, ha, he, ha! a beggar a-horsebuck! Why I guess, lad, it 'll be the first time thee has'e ever been landed in a coach! What be thy name?"

"Reuben."

"A right honest Bible name, and I dare swear the counterpart of honest parents. Sit down, lad, and take a mug o' kitchen brew. It'll no harm a bair up the head."

Reuben received the pot of ale which one of the servitors, at the command of the finely shaved, gave to him, and being both hungry and thirsty, was refreshed by the draft, and sat wondering to see so fat a man, and all the gold lace on his collar and cuffs, and his crimson vest.

"What, Master Reuben, does thee see anything goin' on up——" and here the steward winked and pointed with his thumb up stairs.

"My lady and Captain Oakes?"

"I guessed so—I guessed so! The captain never goes out and comes and rides without my lady, and on that way, but he's caught fire up there!" Here the fourth again sent the significant hint back and upward. But it's not my lady. She is all goldtone. God bless her! Bad ways the captain is falling into!"

"I've heard whispers!" said Stephenson in a subdued tone.

"More than whispers! But mums! We must both keep our tongues still, or we shall be turned out of doors, which would be a bad thing for us both by this finely always. It will come all to a head without our helping it along—and the latter things have got to, anyhow, before long."

"Oh, yes, sir. It is very odd how this lad came by himself, and in a coach and six!"

"It is easy to ask him."

"He's a strong country lout; but he is as stupid as an ass. He won't speak."

"Then is he more stupid, for Balaam's ass spoke!"

"Very true—so he did! This fellow can say anything! Reuben, my lad!"

"Let's try the rogue! Come hither youngster! What were thee doing up stairs?"

"Dun'tw."

"What sent thee here as at?"

"Dun'tw."

"Out upon thy vagabond dun'tw! What is that to answer? Thee is a fool boy, what has thee seen my lady's purse! I'll have thee in quoin for a thief. Where got it?"

"The lady gave it me—not to tell," answered Reuben, as the steward shook him roughly.

"Not to tell! Why, thee is a right village volcano, an' Stephenson" and the fat steward winked at his companion, "we must watch the lad fountain. What'st told she thee not to tell?"

"Dun'tw."

"I'll drumsh thy throat with a grace cup, as the French valet hath it, if thou answer not!"

"No, Reuben, you are excused, do but no violence. My lady hath placed him under my care; and I must not allow him to be abused!"

"Well, for thy sake, I will spare his life," answered the steward, pretending to be appeased, but wind by shaking him. "Get thee out of my sight, Dunsah, but give me the gold-piece, for, by my beard, thou shalt not have it."

Glad to escape from the terrible man, Reuben cast the gold piece from him, and left the room, not escaping, he found himself in the servants' hall.

Here he was received, on the part of women to gentlemen. "I am 'sponsible for him."

The servant maid addressed was a black-eyed Spanish beauty, who caught Reuben by the arm as he was flying past her.

"Where be 'ee a-with him?" asked she laughingly, as she held him by both arms.

Give him to me, Stephenson—I have got to go to the coach inn to see him away, by my lady's orders. He is already over-set, and the sun is setting, close o'clock. Come, my lad, I'll not harm thee, Mary, where is my hat?"

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"Here, Master Reuben's heart had evidently been won by the footman, gave him his hat, and accompanied him to the door, where he left Reuben forth, leaving the rest of the servants gossiping upon curiously about the mysterious boy, and the mysterious visit of the master, galloping off like a man bereft of reason.

"Here, Mary," said Thomas Stephenson, the footman, as they walked together down the garden avenue in the twilight shadows, "Reuben's following on a little ways behind, contended to go now that he is to go at all. Now, Mary, what is it that you will you say you will consent to be married, and let us go and live so nice and happy in that pretty cot at Salisbury? You shall have a hundred pounds."

"And I've got ninety, Thomas."

"That's jolly. I can rent the inn for seventy-six pounds a year; and furnish it, and we can get rich!"

"I don't want to be rich, Thomas."

"Why?"

"I've seen by my lady, that riches an't happiness, nor honor."

"But it is only the captain's bad habits, not their riches that makes all so miserable here?"

"No, my lady's miserable. He doesn't love her! She is getting afraid of him! I have heard—but it is best to be silent."

"Yes. I've heard that he does not get all his money on honest way?"

"What, Thomas, not by highway-robbery?"

"No—not that! But that he cheats my lady somehow and throws dust in her eyes to get at her! But this does not become us to speak of—we must mind our business."

"I was going to say that I overheard him, not by any design, though, either of my lady's."

"Her life?"

"Hush, Thomas! not so loud! Yes. She refused to let him have her jewels to pawn for a great sum of money he lost to Lord Beverly, and I heard him, for I was listening to give her a message, saying that if she refused he would take her life, and so poison himself of all the property."

"This is very bad, indeed; a very bad state of things," said Thomas, shaking his head. "But we are now at the gate that opens upon the high street. Go forward, lad, I will follow close on."

Reuben obeyed, and after passing out of the gate turned in the direction of the principal street into which the lane led. It was now nearly dark, and the stars were rapidly showering themselves over the sky.

"One kiss here, in the nook of the gate, Mary, are we pair," said Thomas tenderly.

"Dear sun! one would think you were going to be married, you are so much laughing, and dragging to him with her lips the gift he sought. Reuben did so, and he told them that he thought so to Thomas that she looked upon him in some sort as a husband.

Then he held her to his breast a gentleman on horseback rode past the gate slowly. There was light enough to see that he was a military man of fine presence. The lovers shrunk back instinctively from the observation. But as they did so they saw a person on foot, muffled to the eyes with his cloak, flash rapidly past, and coming up with the horse and rider, he leaped upon the crupper behind the head of the officer, cry, in a sharp, fierce tone:—

"Your money quick—or your life!"

"Heaven save us—the master's voice!" almost shrieked Mary, clinging with terror to the footman, who, so quickly and suddenly had the scene passed, was paralyzed with amazement; and for certainty was that the voice of Captain Oakes, who was about to commit a highway robbery, made him speechless with horror.

"Neither the one nor the other, villain," answered the gentleman, quickly unfolding his cloak, and by scene the face of the robber, and at the same grasping the pistol.

There was a fierce struggle. The officer spurred his horse forward, trying to drag his assailant from behind him; and then he reined and per his hook; while the robber exerted all his strength to get him to the ground. Either one would have gotten the victory if the pistol had not been discharged in their combat of strength, and the ball entering the body of the officer behind the shoulder-blade, he fell to the earth, while his assailant, seeing his opponent was dead, fled and sneak him.

But the terrible execution the officer ruined it to close upon Captain Oakes—for the highwayman was none else than this man of desperate fortunes and of desperate resources. Reuben was the first to reach the fallen officer, and he was followed by Mary and her footman.

"Here is a terrible tragedy

dant of Hans was one of the tricksters of his race. He wore a satirist coat, and half vest, and green breeches, with a gold cord down the seam, while pons buckles sparkled upon his square-toed shoes.

With that low, obsequious bow, which can only be executed by a negro dependent, he entered the door and quietly awaited his master's orders.

"Pompey?"

"Sar?"

"Where is Stephenson?"

"Dyah, sar, has gone down to de gardeens gine, sar, to see one horse, sar?"

"What horse?"

"Jined horse, sar."

"Oh, ah, yes! I know. There was a horse shot?"

"Yim, sar?"

"Was ole fool, Pompey?"

"Dey say a young boy, sar; tryen to rob gardeen, sar."

"Has they caught him?"

"Oh yim, sar; cotch him in de lane. Dey took him off to jail, sar. Dey say he'll be hung, sar, sho'."

"Go and send Stephenson here!" said the captain, so sternly that the African uttered a guttural exclamation "ruh—yah!" and fled from the room.

Pulaski vanished in a mere Anglo-Saxon manner, his master, after he disappeared. "I must not be so sensitive as to heed what I hear! I must come and coolly to hearing everybody talk about this robbery, and the fate that seems to pursue me! In all conscience I ought to feel resource at being the author of the poor boy's troubles; first by bringing him off from his home, and then by that wholly failed, nicely as it was planned, and now for causing him to have suspicion fall upon suspicion. I trust that I shall be more successful this time in making him useful for my benefit than I was about that signature, thanks to my wife! That woman! I have no patience when my thoughts recur to her. But here is my Scotchman."

"Sir, did you send for me?" asked Thomas, opening the door but a little way, and peering, while he shook with fear.

"Yes, Thomas," said Captain Oakes, assuming a cordial tone.

"Please, sir, if it is the same to you, I would rather stay here, my feet are muddy, sir, and—"

"Muddy! So I suppose you have been down the lane to see the horse that was shot," said the captain, so coolly as he could command his voice, and trying to appear indifferent. "I am quite vexed that such an outrage as has taken place this evening should have occurred behind my own grounds! I am glad they have arrested the robber, and I shall push the matter on to the end, I promise you!"

Thomas stood staring at his master with astonishment impressed on every line of his visage. He had no idea that a man who was guilty of the very crime he was guilty of, could speak so composedly about the punishment of another. Knowing as he did, all the dishonest circumstances of the transaction, and the overawing feature of his master's bold and brazen character, he was at a loss what he was filled with horror. Fear, at being so near so vile a man, prompted him more than ever to close the door and fly, but our Scotch lad presses but from his palace.

"Come hither! Why do you show so much fear? No one is going to rob you! This affair seems to have made a coward of you! Why, now you are as pale as a sheet!"

"Yes, sir, I dare say! What was it you wished me to do, sir?"

"Close the door!"

Thomas obeyed; for there was the habit of obedience which overcame his fear. He entered, but stood doubtful before the man whose house had become a highwayman, and had tried to do a murder, and to whom Thomas had imprudent an innocent youth, friendless, ignorant and helpless; doubtless hoping to sacrifice him to secure his own personal safety. Thomas, however, was not the first mortal dread of so wicked a master, but consequence of judgment halted against him.

"Thomas, I wish you to do me a favor."

The fearless man's countenance betrayed no surprise at the kind tone, and by the request.

"You sir—of course, sir. What can I do?" asked Thomas, not knowing what to say or think.

"You told me on the first of the quarter that you had two hundred pounds by, and which you carry Mary, and leave my service and go and set up a tavern at Wilton."

"Oh, yes, sir, so I did; and if you would consent, I—"

"Not now. You are too useful to me; faithful and honest, as I believe. By-and-by you shall have all your wishes gratified and if you still persevere, you know, and make it a stand thousand!"

"Indeed, sir, you are very kind—but—but—but—"

Thomas hesitated. He wished to say that he would not for all the money in London that touch a shilling of his coin stained with crime. But we do not always from prudential motives say what we think, and the Scotsman not being an adept in subterfuge could only end his sentence with hesitating "but."

"But what?"

"Oh, nothing, sir,—nothing at all, sir."

Captain Oakes fastened his sharp grey eyes upon the secretary's face with a scrutiny of the most malicious, not that he had any idea that Thomas knew or guessed who did the robbery, but, as we have before said, guilt is always suspicious, and cowardice is always timid.

"This wicked pistol-ball you do not make any use of, nor will you need it till the end of this quarter, when I will convert that into money at service and be married; and I will give the pretty Mary a handsome wedding present."

"You are very kind, sir, but Mary don't like jewelry, sir, I'm sure! Indeed I heard her say she didn't like diamonds, and wouldn't have any—not even a ring from me, sir! Indeed, sir, she would much rather have a—"

"Very well. Each one to their tastes. To come to the point, Thomas, I have a thousand pounds in my possession at ten o'clock, like the bank, and I am short of five hundred! It is too late for me to get a check cashed, or a bill drawn on London! I have sent for you to ask you if you will loan me five hundred for a few days?"

"I—I—indeed, sir—"

"Why do you hesitate? Am I not a man of honor?"

"Yes, sir, but I—if it is the same to you, sir, would it should be drawing interest where it is! Sir per cent, sir?"

"I will pay you ten per cent for it, then!"

"But the person who has it, sir, cannot do without its use; and I've promised to give him two weeks' warning before I draw it!"

"Stephenson, I do not believe a word of it. Your money is in the Savings Bank—for you told me so not three weeks ago! You have lied to me!"

The footman turned pale, and cold sweat stood in drops upon his forehead.

"You cannot deceive me. I want your money! I will return it in ten days. I will give you my word in writing that I will do it. Here, sir, is ink! write me an order on the Savings's Bank for five hundred pounds. I will write out the bond!"

Captain Oakes seated himself at the desk and wrote a "promise to pay in ten days, to Thomas Stephenson," for five hundred pounds sterling, with interest to be computed. To this effect his name, and laid it before the eyes of the servitor for him to read it. He took a blank check and drew an order "payable to bearer" on the Savings Bank for five hundred pounds.

"Now sign that!"

"No, sir! no, I can't, sir!"

"You shall, sir!"

"Indeed, sir——"

"Do your part or else! Am I to debase myself so low as to talk my own footman to lend me a paltry sum of his hundred money, in the country, No, fellow! My pride now requires your signature, if no other motive! Here's pen—and here is ink! There is the order! All I want is your name!"

Thomas was scarulous, and loved his hundred silver. His heart sank as he looked toward the bank and the pretty Mary Mayflower; for such was the sweet milkmaid by which the lad's love was designated. He knew the full value of crowns and of kisses; and his affections were equally divided between them. Doubtless—little lawyer as he had by constitution—Thomas would have fought as fiercely—as cunningly—for his money as for his maiden. His knowledge of his master's character as evident about him, and the sudden and total ruin of the five hundred pounds he would never see them again; and then he would have to abandon his marriage with Mary, and give up his prospective inn at Wilton, and all his hopes for the future. His footman's mind flew over these and all those darkly-clouded thoughts and fears, to grow over them with sunshine by which the sunshine flowing in peaceful value, but rushed through his heart, and leaped all red and fiery to his temples and brow.

"I cannot sign it, sir."

"No? Thomas Stephenson, Stanley Oakes, in a voice of thunder.

"Indeed, sir, I can not! Indeed, sir, I will not! Your dare not threaten me, sir!"

"I dare not? What do you mean?"

"I mean what I say!" answered Thomas, growing bold through desperation.

"Child! is life no way you reply to me?"

"Yes, sir. Your are in my power if I choose!" added the footman, with that double-edged pride and indiscretion which accompanies the desperation of cowardice; "you dare not threaten me!"

"Speak, sirrah! what shall I do?" said the Captain seized him by the throat.

Thomas, with a sudden exertion of strength, released himself from his grasp, and flying towards the door shouted back:—

"I saw you attack the colonel and fire the pistol! I know all! I heard you lay it upon the poor lad! I saw you speaking with him, in a tone of the most triumph, the footman opened the door to rush out, but the Africa who, by the order of the master listening, received his fall into his arms.

"Hold him fast!" cried he.

"I got sin tight, mass Cap'n," answered the black man, writhing his long arms about the form of the footman and pinioning him fast in the iron-rung-eating clasp a toe. Thomas struggled vainly; for the negro had seized him by the ear in imitation of his race from the servants' hall, in which Thomas was a participant. "Don't, no, hold white man easy day!"

"Drag him back! We have a matter to settle first. Look the door, Pompey! Now, strah!" and the Captain's face as he spoke was so white and his eyes so cold as ever. "Now, sir, what is the secret! You have sealed your fate, lad! Think you I will let you go? Not while you live, sir! Not I! No, no! Do not grope him so tight, Pompey! Let him go! He can't escape us!"

Thomas stood shaking like a leaf. All his courage was gone. He was at once how foolish he had been. He looked over the tutored face of the man the captain take from a case one of his pistols and examine it. Another after by one the balls and knives and clasped his hands imploringly.

"Oh, sir, forgive me! I—I—I will not! I couldn't help seeing it! It was at the gate going out with this strange boy, when I saw you pass and seize the rein of the horse! I—I—I—I will not!"

"You will not? Then you have seen it! But how, fellow, came you to lay behind to see all this? for the lad was long gone!"

"So I you knew it all then? But how, fellow, came you to lay behind to see all this? for the lad was long gone!"

"Mary walked down to the gate too, and I stopped a minute to say a word to her, and then I saw you pass, your worship, and all happened!"

"And Mary saw me?"

"Yes, your worship!"

"No witness? The Fates are against me!" he muttered, walking to the window. "If it was rightly,—I am in his power. I must be polite and cautious. Threats against him, or his friends will but add to my own danger. Where were for him would soon enable her to guess who put him out of the way; and so I shall stop at nothing to secure my into peace. No—I am environed enough with danger! And seems to be inclined to favor me, sir?" he said, suddenly turning away from the window and addressing, in a quiet, pleasant way, the fearful footman.

"Sir?"

"I see you know more than you ought, and Mary, also! Now, you must also know, that it is not safe for me to have such knowledge of me, or my man's breast but my own!" I will not threaten you; but this I say, that if you or Mary wish to live out the month, the secret is your own, she shall perish! You know me well enough to be assured that I will stop at nothing to secure my self! Hear me! Write me the order for the £500, and take my bond at thirty days. If I do not pay it, you are at liberty to spring this secret upon the world and have me hanged! Although you now are much like to be hanged yourself, as you are momentarily suspected.

Thomas wrote his name mutatedly at the foot of the draft.

"That is well! You have now done me a good service, Stephenson, and I shall not forget it," said the captain, taking up the signed order and throwing down his bond upon it. "Here, take your draft! Recollect, I'll suffer it to be protested; you may bestow your congrats; otherwise, remember, your two lives depend upon your secrecy: for I have means to reach you and destroy you with my own hand, even from a friend's cell, should your self-like qualities place me there."

As the captain spoke he looked towards the Ethiopian significantly, and then beckoned him with a slight movement of his little finger.

"Is it not the truth, Pete?" he demanded, with a dark, wicked smile, of the negro, before whom all the preceding interview had passed unbooked by the captain, as if the African were deaf, or a statue, or was so intimately identified with his master's interests that no secrecy was ever studied in his presence. He was the last supposition. The African was bound, lady and soul, and will, to his master, who had, twelve years before, rescued him at the "Cape," where he was then enslaved, from a death of torture about to be inflicted upon him by a hostile tribe, who had taken him prisoner in one of their feudal wars. As a dog follows his master, and licks the hand that beats him, and loves upon the foot that spurns him, so Pompey attached himself from that day to his deliverer, with gratitude to say of no man which the man Friday felt towards Robinson Crusoe.

The poor lad trained the imitative African into a civilized servant, with a broken knowledge of the English tongue. The will of his master was his own; and he would not have hesitated to slay promptly any man the captain commanded him to destroy.

"Yim, mass! You kin do fo' wot you want sar!"

"With your aid! This black, Stephenson, knows too well my skills. At a word from me he and Mary were dangerous to me, you had better fly to Australia, or the furthest west, than hope to remain in England alive! Like a slouch hound he would track you until he had brought you down. Before me he trembles as a child! Eh?"

Thomas drew back from the scarlet-coated savage in evident shrinking.

"Please, sir, I will keep still, and no will Mary, for my mistress sake!"

"Well! That is the motive! Well, I care not what it be, so you keep the secret; and let it out, you know the penalty! Now, go! I trust it to keep your neck; and, hark ye! if for betray it, you will pay it with your life, and also to repay to your five hundred pounds!"

"If I pay it with the word for the poor lad, sir?" asked Thomas, so whose avarice the last argument was conclusive.

"Yes, if you will!"

"Then I will keep it, sir. I will see that he shall not suffer; but this depends on your secrecy."

"Be certain, sir, of that!"

"Then don't concern yourself about him."

"May I go now, sir?" asked Thomas, stilling towards the door.

"You bid *beave* ?"

"Indeed I will, sir."

And the next moment the footman had disappeared from the apartment.

The eyes of Captain Oakes rested upon the door out of which he went, fixedly and thoughtfully.

"He is to be trusted—known to be so. If they even whisper I am lost! But I think I can put the fellow to sleep, and then I will be safe! Incredible secret! I must see her. But now I need rest of body and mind! I have got the right thing to do, and last, but with what torture and trouble of mind—and through what scenes with Mary Mayflower! Milton said, 'Peace of mind,' was the last thing, received him fell into his arms.

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THE CONCLUSION IN OUR NEXT.

TO BEL JOYCE—A CHILD.

Who gave me a Spray of Rose.

BY EMMA ALICE BROWNE.

When these buds are—white and fair
As the cheek the children wear
Who die early. Sweet, I pray,
Be thy memory sacred—they
Whom a rose of Hope—
Whom a rose of Love be likened
Freely, trusting, sunny lief.

Let the blow of summer skies,
Glorious as the stars eyes,
Be dearer to thee as once were
Of holy tastes for, that keep
Gentler than love—than sweet
Of our Lord's eye, sweet Bel!

As the lilies with the rose,
So may each star with pale,
Till the child's heart, soft and small,
Blossom struck the glorious spark;
And the child's heart, soft and small,
Blended at the pale gates of my heart.

While the low pulsation motions
Of the child's love wound and wound
Up its wild scope of sweet,
Up to sunlight, and the starlight,
There a lovely rose—a spray—

WHAT IT COST.

BY T. S. ARTH

"I am sure," said Mrs. Blair, speaking very earnestly, "that we are quite as able as the Perkinses to move in our circle."

"That may, or may not be," replied her husband, carelessly, as he took his paper, and began reading it.

Mrs. Perkins told me yesterday—I was over to see her—what a recent little place they have!—Mrs. Perkins, as I was saying, will not, positively, that the house and garden cost them only two thousand dollars."

"Well, it has cost them—or will cost them in the end—a great deal more than two thousand dollars," said Mr. Blair.

"More than two thousand! What are you talking about?" Mrs. Blair looked astonished.

"Mrs. Perkins said that some people thought they had paid high for the property, though her husband considered it a bargain."

"A dear bargain he will find it in the end, or I am mistaken. Two thousand dollars make only a small portion of the cost."

"Do you know Perkins, Alfred?"

"I do not mean to be."

"Well, you are. When a man pays a certain price for a thing, and comes into full possession of what he has bought, I can not understand how only a part of the cost has been paid."

"A house and garden may be improved, you know. There is no end to improvement. A man chooses to gratify a liberal fancy, or even a morbid love of the beautiful. But I do not mean to be."

"I should like, then, to know what you do mean?" said Mrs. Blair, almost pettishly.

"The cost of a thing," replied her husband, looking at her and then looking again at his paper, "is not fully estimated when we down at a single moneyvaluation. There is always a cost beyond this; and sometimes it is largely in excess of the original estimate. In the case of Mr. Perkins, from all I hear of his habits, his home and garden will cost him a fearful price."

"I will talking in riddles," said Mrs. Blair.

"See! There is Mr. Perkins now!" And Mr. Blair looked from the window.

"Yes, he is!"

"He looks thoughtful," said Mr. Blair.

"He does."

"Even serious."

"Yes."

"Troubled."

"Not a troubled look. And that is unusual."

Mr. Perkins was always a cheerful man until recently. But, to the two thousand dollars paid for his house, was added a heavy load of debt.

A shadow passed over the face of Mrs. Blair.

"Have you brought this property?" continued her husband, "Mr. Perkins was getting along in his business very comfortably. But, the abstraction of a large sum of money from his monthly receipts has thrown him into the money-market as a borrower; and now he has to spend nearly one-half of his time in devising the ways and means to get the interest on his principal loans. He did not take this into the estimate of cost when he bought his house and garden. But even this might be thrown in as a mere convenience, and the feeling of mind had been retained. Also! this was impossible."

Mrs. Blair did not lift her eyes from the floor to which they had fallen; and her husband continued:

"Mr. Perkins came into my store, hurriedly, at half past two o'clock yesterday, and said to me, in an agitated manner:—'Pay lend me three hundred dollars until to-morrow!' I have a note still in bank, and am short that amount. I can get the money from an Algerine in Third street at one per cent. for a week, and exchange notes at the neighborhood. I gave him a check for the money, and there were fifty Perkinses in my store, or the Algerines, as he calls certain Shylocks to be money-lending mankind. What do you think of that, my dear wife? This is simply a part of the price he is paying for his house and garden. He has not counted either of these, on renewing loans, last evening? Or, has his wife found so much pleasure in his society in when they lived in a stinted house?"

"You are a weak, foolish man," said Mrs. Blair, "to take two thousand dollars from his business when he was unable to spare so large a sum."

"Just as weak and foolish as I would be were I to follow his example," replied Mr. Blair.

"A new view of the case altogether; and I think we had better let well enough alone," said the enlightened wife, who received a hint from her husband as to felt for his state that morning. "I think was more than Mrs. Perkins had received since her removal into the new house.

"I think," said a merchant, who had always said Mr. Perkins on six months' credit, "that we had better limit the account of our neighbor around in Second street."

"Four thousand seven hundred dollars."

"So much!" The merchant seemed surprised at the sum.

"He has bought more freely than usual of late," said he salesman.

"Don't let him add another dollar to his present indebtedness." The merchant spoke firmly.

"Is anything wrong?" asked the salesman.

"Wrong just this far: He is on the street, I hear, as a borrower, almost every day. It won't do as a year rule. He was then always to be found in his place of business, ready to meet customers. When a merchant is a borrower, my opinion is, you may be sure that something is wrong. Don't let Mr. Perkins have another package of goods until some of his notes are paid, and then sell him sparingly. Do you understand me, Jim? If he will buy, put up the prices, to cover the extra risk."

"It shall be as you desire," returned the salesman, and, on the very day, Mr. Perkins was refused credit on a bill of goods by a house which had sold him freely for five years.

Surprised and troubled, he went back to his store in a depressed state of mind. He could not be benefited, as does and he could get at the clue by which he unravel this mystery. "Something is wrong," he said to himself, "or I would not be refused higher now than it did six, two, or three years ago. But, what can it be?" he questioned; and my business is steadily on the increase."

But earnestly though he thought, Mr. Perkins did not succeed in the right direction. He could not find the clue.

"I hear," said another merchant, who had also been in the habit of selling him freely, "that Perkins has been showing signs of pressure."

"Ah! I'm glad to hear of that," was replied by the individual to whom this remark was adopted. "What are the signs?"

"One is, the purchase of a house for his family."

The other shook his head.

"A bad sign, for a man who is in the street every day for money, and who has at one time paid out of bank until after two o'clock."

"Indeed!" asked the merchant, with a look of surprise.

"It is even so. I don't believe a day has passed, for the last month or more, that he has not been on the borrower's list."

"I am astonished. Something, I fear, is wrong."

"I thought him hard pushed; nothing more," was answered. "But, if he is buying real estate, he is in a bad way, and will soon be on credit."

He has no surplus fund for that kind of indulgence."

"Then I must restrict his line of credit at once," said the merchant.

"You still him freely?"

"Have always done so."

"Then you may save you a few thousand dollars in the end; for if Perkins is going into the real estate business, or any other business, in addition to his serviceable operations, he is bound to fail in time."

And so it was settled that Mr. Perkins was not to have another cent of credit. On the very day of the merchant who had been enlightened touching the real condition of affairs, he was informed, that as soon as it was possible, that was the hour that not, for the present, with him to increase his indebtedness.

On the afternoon of the very day, Mrs. Blair was ushered in to see Mrs. Perkins. A look of surprise on made upon her, may be seen in this brief conversation with her husband:

"I have been to see Mrs. Perkins," she said, as they sat at the tea-table: "and he looked ten years older than when I last saw her. She must be sick?"

"She is sick at heart, I presume," answered the husband, gravely.

"What's the matter?"

"Her husband was making another payment on his house and garden, and it his crushed him to the ground, I fear."

"I thought he had paid for that long ago," said Mrs. Blair, looking up from her cup.

"He will never be done paying for it," returned Mr. Blair.

"The price was only two thousand dollars."

"Two thousand dollars! That is a trifle to what it has, and will cost him. I know it, because he has paid half of that sum in consistent interest on our store account. Before he has done with his payments, since the two thousand dollars were abstracted from his business to lock up in bricks and mortar, he will have made a return to his miserable discredit, arising from the fact that he is known as a borrower at every street, and alleged; and I learned to-day, that more than one publishing-house will not credit him for more than any amount he cared to buy, have declined selling him any longer. His failure, I dare say, will be a heavy one. Poor Perkins! I am sorry to see him break down under this crushing weight of a house and garden, which ought never to have added one single strength to bear the additional burden. Indeed, I am sorry that he ever saw the place, or that it ever came to-day. He was take in my store, almost begging for a few hundred dollars to meet a note that was to be paid in bank before the purchase of his house and garden, but the loan of which I was unable to make, for the reason that I was out of bank transaction. You say he looked badly?"

"Yes; and I never saw such a change in any one. He was walking languidly, with his eyes cast down. His face was pale as ashes, and had his features changed as we sometimes see the lips of one partially deranged."

"Ah me!" ejaculated Mr. Blair. "I am afraid his worst has come, and that the heaviest of all the crosses that he has taken up will be the real unlucky purchase."

It was, alas! as Mr. Blair had feared. Two months after this, signed by Mr. Perkins, were still in bank, on that day, when three o'clock struck he was not there, and the merchant's fears that he would be sent home a ruined man.

"Poor fellow!" the house and garden that cost "only two thousand dollars." After being an eye-witness to this disaster, the cause of which were quite unknown to Mrs. Blair, was enabled to live in a rented house and let her husband retain in business the capital so essential to his healthy condition. A letter and garden of their own would have been very pleasant, but, as it was impossible to figure up the exact cost of such an indulgence, she fully agreed with her prudent husband, that it was the easiest thing in the world for them to let well enough alone, until they were certain of their ability to do better.

NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, Editor and Proprietor.

NEW-YORK, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 1857.

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In addition to the above unequalled array of distinguished authors, (nearly all of whom write only for the LEDGER,) we are favored with occasional contributions from scores of other popular writers, as will be seen by reference to our columns from week to week. We pay more money for contributions by popular and eminent writers, in order to make a great and good paper, than is paid by any ten other weekly papers in the country; and, as a legitimate result, our circulation is larger than the combined circulation of any ten others.

NEWSPAPERS AND RAILROADS.

It is somewhat remarkable, that these two agencies in the social and physical progress of the age—and they are the two mightiest—are, when they come before judges and juries for a hearing, too often subjected to a false and baneful prejudice. They stand, perhaps, better chances in the city than in the country, but in either case the courts of law would seem to conspire to curtail the essential liberties of both. No matter what the circumstances, where the individual prosecutes the railroad, the court naturally leans to the idea that corporations are rich, careless and insolent, and can afford to be found guilty. Besides, the people side with the same idea, and a judge with political aspirations will hardly refuse to consider this fact.

So, too, when a newspaper is prosecuted for libel—as many wrongfully are—though the editor justify himself by proving the absolute truth of all he has published, and prove, also, entire absence of malice, judges find it hard to charge in his favor. They are fond of the argument—"the press is a mighty engine, too apt to be careless; an engine which assumes undue and insolent prerogatives, and, therefore, gentlemen of the jury, it should be taught lessons of propriety and humility." In either case, railroad or newspaper, the court cannot be satisfied until it casts a reflection upon all newspapers and railroads.

We have in our recollection a libel case in which, by the showing of the plaintiff, he failed to make a case for want of identity of subject, yet, in spite of this and the complete proof on the part of the (editor) defendant of all the facts alleged by him, the judge charged against the press, on the ground of its proclivity to libel, and the jury, from respect for a custom which we cannot admire, shaped their verdict to the judge's charge. This was the more peculiar, since the judge instructed the defendant that he had only to prove the truth of his allegations, and absence of malice, to sustain his case.

Now the press must have reasonable limits, and certain established rights, or it must cease to be the great teacher and warner which its nature and genius warrant. If it cannot speak the truth in one instance, and comment fairly on the facts therein involved—facts, often involving the interests and safety of society—it may be fettered in every instance, where individuals only are concerned. It can no more pursue the robber, the forger, and the murderer, into the light, nor lash villainy naked through the world. The press, faulty and corrupt as it may be, is the noblest sentinel watching on the outposts of the nation and community, and over the humblest hearth. It spreads abroad, with electric speed, the words of intelligence and the voice of warning. It never can be greatly treacherous to the public good, for the support it receives is voluntary, and is measured by the intelligence and confidence of the people; therefore any fundamental prejudice against it is ungenerous, unwarranted, and false. It is to be hoped that judges and juries will ere long look upon it in this light, and aid, rather than hinder, it in its great and arduous work.

HARD TIMES.—A REMEDY.

"Really, the times are so hard," says Mrs. Spendall, "I don't know what we are coming to. Mr. Spendall looks as blue as indigo if I hint at money, and talks of nothing but failure and ruin. I can't understand it."

We understand it, Mrs. Spendall; you constantly carry the solution of the problem about with you. Your costly and innumerable dresses, your fifty-dollar handkerchief and collars, and your extravagant jewelry, plainly indicate what the trouble is. Then there are your wasteful and ungoverned servants, and your own idleness and spendthrift habits generally. No wonder your husband looks blue, and "talks of failure and ruin." You are enough to ruin any man. And if you would avert the threatening calamity, *go to work.* Discharge your servants, sell your gewgaws, retrench expenses, stay at home, make yourself useful, save your husband from "failure and ruin," and be happy—which you never can be while you are simply ambitious to rival other women as stupid as yourself, in senseless display and stupendous selfishness.

PREVENTION VERSUS CURE.

The familiar maxim that "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," is, as we verily believe, gradually gaining practical credence. In reference to the diseases of the body, we think we clearly see indications of this in our bills of mortality—not those of our own city, merely, but everywhere. While, for instance, the weekly reports of deaths in New York have latterly given as large a figure as seven hundred—which is large, nothwithstanding the rapid growth of our city—they have also afforded social classifications sufficiently significant, with the aid of inference, to justify the hopeful conclusion with which we set out, viz.: that *the ratio of the dying to the living, among the better-to-do and more intelligent classes, is decreasing year by year.* This inference we are warranted in drawing by the casual statements of medical gentlemen of our acquaintance. Pointing to the great number of deaths among children, they have been heard to query, "Whose cases were these? I encounter very few of such in my practice, and my medical associates assure me that their experience is the same!"

Now, what are we to infer from these facts? Why this, that as newspapers, and books, and schools multiply, knowledge must increase—aye, and improve in its *quality* as well as its quantity. It becomes more practical too, and disseminates more and more information as to natural laws—the relation of the body and the mind to each, and their joint relation to the physical universe, with its unalterable laws of cause and effect, commonly enough, now-a-days, denominated Physiology, for everybody to comprehend its meaning, as we are trying to show an increasing number do its importance. Thus, as people become more intelligent, in this regard, they become wiser, and study to *prevent* disease.

A similar tendency is clearly traceable in the field of morals—a disposition to *prevent* pauperism and crime, instead of waiting to punish it. We wish we could see *more* of this. But there is already enough to make the philanthropist feel hopeful.

SYMPATHY WITH SERVANTS.

The tendency, all the while, is to change of servants; and the complaint is heard, in every circle, that good help is so hard to get,—that, when a good servant *is* secured—at intervals as long as those said to characterize angels' visits—she is sure to make her stay very short, &c. Meanwhile, the advertising columns of the daily papers are crammed with "wants" from both employees and employers, and the Intelligence Offices, where "choice family servants" are to be obtained, are crowded with candidates for situations and applicants for girls—which, by the way, suggests the question whether these places, whose name is legion, have not become "intelligence offices" in another sense, *i. e.*, places where Scandal holds her malign court, and works out some of the most disastrous social consequences?

Now, we think it altogether likely that the facilities for getting servants on the one hand, and getting places on the other,—which these middle men of the Intelligence Offices furnish—are working evil by rendering both mistress and maid too independent of each other for their mutual good. At any rate, we throw out the suggestion as a subject worthy the study of domestic and social economists, while we pass to what we desire to indicate pointedly in this article:—The *need of more sympathy for domestic subordinates*, on the part of heads of families. It may be well enough to prate of obedience to the good scriptural rule that "the laborer is worthy of his hire." But it does not fulfil the "whole law" of the relation under notice. No, no. Servant girls, far away from "home" and friends—separated from them, perhaps, by a wide ocean not yet underlaid by a magnetic cable—can not live by "bread alone," with even good angels. They need far more *sympathy* than they usually get. *It* would attach them to their "places;" it would convert merest eye-servants into trustworthy ones, and *pay* well in the end, thus proving a wise as well as a humane policy. Grumblers, suppose you *try* it!

THE PASSIONS.

The emotions of the mind, which are commonly spoken of as passions, without stopping to make nice distinctions between the different classes of emotions, or to gauge them by philosophical rules, were undoubtedly provided for by the Creator with a view to man's happiness. And the justification of the arrangement is found in the beatific tendencies of their legitimate play. Without them, social life would present the tiresome condition of a dead level, with no fears and no hopes—none of those varied alternations of which the human soul is capable, and which give vivacity and buoyancy to character. Divested of these mental motors, we should all become Stoics in the most practical sense—for what is the gist of the teachings of Zeno and his school, but the condition of moral insensibility, and therefore that indifference to pleasure and pain, which such a divesture presupposes. Clearly, it is nothing else.

It has strikingly been said that the virtuous man of the Stoics is like a ship in a calm—unable to move one way or the other—while the follower of Epicurus is like a vessel in a violent storm. Every moment he is in peril of being dashed to pieces, or being sunk to the bottom of the ocean! It is, then, to the proper control of our passions that we are to look.

What, but the cultivation of the graces of Christianity, can give a safe reliance for this result? What, but that which, as Hannah More forcibly observes, changes even the passion of our anger—against persons we dislike—into hatred of their *sins?* With a sort of divine alchymy, Christianity has so transmuted passions that have been working for evil, as to make them most active in the cause of Religion, and for the production of the virtues as its living fruits.

A PERNICIOUS SHEET.—The New York Tribune seems to revel in accounts of loathsome licentiousness. It lets slip no opportunity to parade in its columns the details of vice, colored and adorned with the wit and fancies of editorial imaginations which seem to glow with unusual and congenial lustre whenever immorality is the theme. This, perhaps, is not to be wondered at, when one takes into consideration the peculiar atmosphere which surrounds the Tribune editorial brain; but it is a matter of wonder that parents will expose the impressible minds of their children to the contaminations of such a pernicious sheet.

☞ The new story, "LADY CLAUDINE; *or, The Double Marriage*," which we commence in this number of the LEDGER, is one of the most interesting and thrilling Tales we have ever read. The installment given this week, though it is packed with highly dramatic interest, affords but a slight idea of the powerful and absorbing fascination of the entire story.

FRESH FERN LEAVES.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1855, by ROBERT BONNER, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

TRIP TO THE CAATSKILLS.

NUMBER THREE.

It was very pleasant to see little children at the Caatskills; but they were all too few. Children are generally supposed to be bad travelers: this is a mistake. They have often more self-denial, fortitude, and endurance, than half your grown people. I can answer at least for one little girl under my charge from whom no amount of burning sun,—hunger, or fatigue—extorted a syllable of complaint;—in fact I once saw her endure a car-collision with the same commendable philosophy, while men old enough to be her father, were frantic with affright. Render unto children their due, is on the fly-leaf of *my* Bible.

Yes, it is good for them to go out of cities. A city child is a cruel, wicked, shapeless, one-sided abortion. 'Tis a pale shoot of a plant, struggling bravely for its little day of life in some rayless corner, all unblest by the warm sunshine which God intended to give to it color, strength, and fragrance. What wonder that the blight falls on it? Do you say, pshaw? Do you suppose a child, for instance, could appreciate the scenery at the Caatskills? I ask you, do all the *adults* who flock there to gaze, appreciate it? Do you not hear the words "divine,"—"enchanting,"—"beautiful,"—"magnificent,"—applied by them, as often to costume as to clouds? Give me a child's appreciation of such a scene before that of two-thirds of the adult gazers. Its thought may be half-fledged, and given with lisping utterance, but it *is* a thought. The eyes while speaking, may suddenly change their look of wondering awe, for one of elfish fun; what matter! The feeling was sincere, though fleeting—genuine, though fragmentary. By-and-bye that little child, leaving its sports, will come back again to my side as I sit upon the rocks; and any gray-haired philosopher who can, may answer the question with which she seals my lips; any poet who can, may coin a phrase which—more fitly than her's, symbols nature's beauty. Now she's off to play again—leaving the deep question unanswered, but not for that reason to be forgotten—no more than the rock, or mountain or river, which called it forth, and which is hung up like a cabinet picture in that childish memory, to be clouded over, it may be, by the dust and discolorations of after years, but never destroyed—waiting quietly the master touch which obliterating all else, as if trivial or unworthy, restores only to the fading eye of age, in freshened beauty, the glowing pictures of childhood.

The great charm of the Caatskills, is its constant variety; look where you may, you shall never see twice the same effect, of light and shade. Again, and again, I said to myself—how amid such prodigal, changeful beauty, shall the artist choose? Life were all too short for the decision. Ever the busy finger of Omnipotence, silently showing us wonder upon wonder. "Silently," did I say? Ah, no;—ever writing, on cloud and valley, rock, mountain, and river—"all these as a scroll shall be rolled away, but My Word shall never pass away."

I have not spoken of the lovely rides in the vicinity of the Caatskills, of which we were not slow to avail ourselves. Turn which way we would, all was beauty. And yet, not all—I must not forget among these magnificent mountains the hateful, bare, desolate, treeless, vineless, old-fashioned school-house, resembling a covered pound for stray calves. What a sight it was, to be sure, to see the weary children swarm out into the warm sunshine, shouting for very joy that they *might* shout, and trying their poor cramped limbs to see if they had not actually lost the use of them in those inquisitorially devised seats. Alas! what an alphabet might a teacher who was a *child-lover* have deciphered, *outside* those purgatorial walls, on trees, and flowers, and mountains; the teaching of which would have needed no quickening ferule, cramped no restless limbs, overtasked and diseased no forming brain. What streams of knowledge, waiting only the divining rod of the lover of God, and his representatives—*little children*—to freshen and to beautify wheresoever they should flow!

Yes—it was good to see those children kicking their reprieved heels in the air—I only wish they could have kicked over that desolate old school-house. *They* didn't know why I nodded to them such a merry good day; they never will know, poor victims, how royally well I sympathized with their somersets on the grass—they thought, perhaps, that I knew the "school-marm;"—heaven forbid—I would rather know the incendiary who should set fire to her school-house!

In one neighborhood—which is so small that an undertaker must be sorely puzzled to find subjects—I noticed a hideous picture of a coffin stuck on the front of a small dwelling-house, with a repulsive ostentation that out-did even New York. This, to an invalid visiting the Caatskills for health, (and there are many such,) must be an inspiriting sight!

This summer-travel, after all, is a most excellent thing. It is well for people from different parts of the country to rub off their local angles by collision. It is well for those of opposite temperaments and habits of thought, to look each other mentally in the face. It is well for the indefatigable mother and housekeeper to remain ignorant, for one blessed month, of the inevitable—"what shall we have for dinner?" It is well for the man of business whose thoughts are narrowed down to stocks and stores, to look out on the broad hills, and let the little bird's song stir memories of days when heaven was nearer to him than it has ever been since. It is well for the ossified old bachelor to air his selfishness in the genial atmosphere of woman's smile. It is well for the overtasked clergyman, and his equally overtasked (though not equally salaried) wife, to have a brief breathing spell from vestries and verjuice. It is well for their daughter, who has been tied up to the parish pillory of—"you must not do this," and "you must not do that," and "you must not do the other," till she begins to think that God did not know what he was about when he made her, to bestow so many powers, and tastes, and faculties, which must be forever folded up in a napkin, for fear of offending "Mrs. Grundy." *It is well for the Editor, that he may look in the faces of the women whose books he has reviewed, and condemned, too, without reading a blessed word of them!!* It is well for everybody—even the exclusives who hesitate, through fear of plebeian contamination, to sit down in the common parlor; because, were all the world wise—which heaven forbid—there would be nothing to laugh at!

FANNY FERN.

"I GREW THE REST."—A boy three years of age was asked who made him. With his little hand leveled a foot above the floor he artlessly replied—"God made me a little boy so high, and I grow the rest."

WHAT WAS IT LIKE?

We dropped in, a few days ago, at a restaurant, in the lower part of the city, where we were witness to the following agreeable incident:—

At a table on our left sat a respectable-looking old gentleman, with spectacles over a finely-chiseled Roman nose, doing justice to a "rare" sirloin-steak and a mug of ale, at which latter he ever and anon addressed himself with a long-drawn "hah!" of innate satisfaction. It was his taste to drink the ale, and ours, while waiting for our mutton and green peas, to observe him. When he had finished, which he did not till the last fragment of the sirloin, and the last drop in the mug, had disappeared, he rose, paid his bill, and was moving towards the door, when he observed a party of five—three males and two females—at a small table on the right. Though neat, clean, and moderately well-dressed, they had the unmistakeable air of immigrants just landed, and were evidently rather inconveniently short in pocket, for each was making the most of a cup of coffee and three small slices of bread of that wafer-like thinness for which our restaurant slices are in general so remarkable.

The old gentleman paused, ran his eyes through his glasses first at the various members of the group, then at their frugal fare, and then approaching them, inquired, with a smile that did one good to look at,—

"From England?"

The clear, lively flesh-color of their faces, or perhaps a something—the aspirated H for instance—in the murmur of their voices, as they conversed, might have led him to this supposition. But whatever it was, he put the interrogatory in a tone that indicated that he was quite sure it would be answered in the affirmative.

"From h'Ingland," replied the youngest of the group, none of whom were over twenty-five, the respondent perhaps hardly yet twenty-one.

"Long landed?" continued, with his beaming smile, the old gentleman, who evidently comprehended the weakness of their finances.

H'about a *hour!*" returned the youth, with a modest blush that would have become a woman.

"I am from old England, myself," said the old gentleman, extending his hand as if to the whole party, and doubtless expecting them all to shake it at the same time. "I have just had an excellent beefsteak, and it was so good that I should be pleased to have each of you try one. It will," he added, with a smile that made us feel warmly towards him, "remind you of the good old steaks at 'ome!"

The group looked with blushing diffidence first at the generous stranger, and then at one another, as if while each yearned for the savory sirloin, neither had the courage—or the brass, if the reader will—to confess it and hoped some one would accept, in the name of all, the proffered hospitality. The old gentleman comprehended their feelings, called a waiter, and ordering the steaks, a good supply of bread, and a pint pot of coffee for each, wished the party "good fortune in America," and delicately put them at ease, by moving to the counter, paying the whole amount of their repast and departing.

We know not, of course, what shall become of those fine young immigrants; but whatever may be their fortunes, sure we are, from the dew upon their eyelashes, as he turned away, that they will ever feel warmly towards the generous, considerate old gentleman who put encouragement in their hearts, on the, to them, memorable occasion of their *first meal in America.*

TRIUMPH.

As from the dark unfragrant ground
The rose comes up all brightly red,
So from our sorrows for the dead,
Grows faith to shed its sweetness round.

Through trial—triumph must be soon—
The acorn in the earth is cast,
And dies to quicken, and at last
Feels out its way into the sun.

ALICE CARY.

REMEMBER HOME.

Fortunate—unspeakably fortunate, is the young man who has a home that he loves, and dear ones nestling there to whom his heart goes out in immeasurable yearnings of affection. The youth who has come to the city to seek his fortune, is guarded as by an angel from Heaven, when he carries fresh in his memory the picture of a humble cottage home which shelters the dear and venerated being who gave him birth. The thrill of her loving touch, as she laid her hand upon his head in blessing, ere he turned his footsteps toward the great city, shall hold him ever in the Path of Life, and charm the Tempter away. And still more blessed is he if he has to devote a portion of his wages to the support of that home, and of those dear ones whom he so loves. In such a case, his earnings are hallowed with a sacredness which communicates itself to his character, and is exhibited in blossoms of noble duteousness. The consciousness that the wages of his toil gladden, and beautify, and make comfortable, the home of his childhood, and the authors of his being, gives a dignity to his labor, and a delight in its rewards, such as no mere selfish spirit of acquisition can impart. Therefore, O ye young men, remember your paternal homes, and devote at least a portion of your earnings to the making of them brighter and happier, that your own life-path may be brightened by the effulgence which is ever radiated from good deeds.

DIVORCE.

Divorces are becoming alarmingly common. Not a week passes without chronicling from one to several "actions for divorce." Murmurs are becoming frequent against the stringency of the laws of this State upon the subject, which do not permit divorces for every petty grievance, whether real or imaginary; and it is stated that efforts will soon be made to reduce our divorce laws to the level of those of some other States. To any such movement we are inflexibly opposed. Marriage should be of more permanence than dicers' contracts or politicians' promises. It would be much better, perhaps, to have no divorce at all, except for criminal infidelity. Let people be held to the consequences of their own acts. The chief trouble lies in the hasty, inconsiderate and stupid manner in which marriages are contracted. A couple meet, take a fancy to each other, conceal all their faults, humbug one another for a few months, marry, find each other out, become disgusted, quarrel, and apply for a divorce. As long as people act from impulse, fancy, love, or anything else but reason and conscience, they will get into trouble. Of course there should be no marriage without love, but reason and conscience should approve of and coalesce with it, and then the union will be harmonious and profitable, and never be disrupted by divorce.

VENTILATION.—As each human being inhales about sixty gallons of air an hour, the necessity of attention to ventilation in close apartments is evident. Keep up the supply of pure and uninfected air as much as possible.

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

LIBELERS are literary bravos, supported by bravos or illiterate cowards. If the receiver of stolen goods is as bad as the thief, the buyer of libels is as guilty as their authors. As the reader of a slanderous journal would, if he had the talent, write what he reads, the maligner would become a malefactor had he the opportunity and the courage. He who stabs you with a pen would do the same with a penknife, were he equally safe from detection and the law.

THE mouth of a slanderer may be aptly compared to that of a volcano. The lighter portions of what it vomits forth are dissipated by the winds; the heavier ones fall back into the throat whence they were disgorged. Perhaps the aspersions of libelers may be more aptly compared to fullers' earth, which, though it may dirt you at first, only leaves you more pure and spotless when it is rubbed off.

A GOOD library is a precious catacomb, wherein are embalmed and preserved imperishable the great minds of the dead who can never die. In the library of the world men have hitherto been ranged according to the form, the size, and the binding. The time is at hand when they will take rank and order according to their contents and intrinsic merits.

WHAT are called the literati may be divided into two classes—those who live to study and those who study to live; the former tending to elevate literature, and the latter to degrade it. The first generally survive their own death; the last often die and are forgotten in their life time, for that which is written for the day must expire with it.

IT has long been a question whether a man's diet has any influence upon his courage. We should like to see the trial made. Let a notoriously brave man, who has fed for a week upon hares' livers be brought in contact with a coward who has lived for a week upon lion-steaks, cooked upon burning lava and seasoned with gunpowder.

WE have just received two indifferent pieces of poetry designed for our paper, and addressed to distinguished men. We are at a loss to decide whether they are inspired by the cravings of an empty stomach, or the gratitude of a full one.

WE were happy to see, not long ago, a notice of the marriage of Miss Angelina Braham, a daughter of the great vocalist. We congratulate the bridegroom upon his privilege of reposing, even on earth, upon A. Braham's bosom.

An Irish gentleman having purchased an alarm-clock, an acquaintance asked him what he intended doing with it. "Oh," said he, "I have only to pull the string and awake myself."

AN ill-natured editor, a neighbor of ours, charges us with "diffusing ignorance." He condenses it. He usually condenses as much ignorance in a given space as if he worked with a hundred-ass-power.

A WESTERN editor says that he "goes for his country, tooth and toe-nail." Undoubtedly his teeth and toe-nails are a most formidable accession to the terrible collection of the implements of war in our country's arsenal.

WE think there is no wonder that we hear so much of the sorrows of love, since there is a pleasure even in dwelling upon its pains. Reveling in tears, its fire, like that of Naphtha, likes to swim upon water.

A TENNESSEE editor, while complimenting us, says that, in viewing our course, he has "a mathematical eye." Undoubtedly he has. His eye has the power of multiplication. It doubles everything.

A loafer left his wife in a great rage, telling her that he would never come back till he was rich enough to come in a carriage. For once he kept his word, being trundled home in a wheelbarrow.

"I never ask a gentleman for money," said a New England preacher. "Then how do you live?" inquired his friend. "Why, after a certain time, I conclude that a man is not a gentleman, and then I ask him."

"You are in bad health; your face is spare," said a friend of ours on meeting an acquaintance. "Very well," said the other, "if I am thin-faced you are double-faced, so that both of us have spare faces."

A BANKRUPT friend of ours was condoled with the other day for his embarrassment. "Oh, I am not embarrassed at all," said he. "It is my creditors that are embarrassed."

WE were once asked the question, "What is always ready and never wanted." If we were compelled by a court of law to answer the question, we should say, "*old maids.*"

It is a fact, though perhaps not a very remarkable one, that some voices, generally very disagreeable, sound an exquisite music when they say "good-bye."

A father and son, Anthony and Thomas Screw, escaped on the 25th ult. from the Wetumpka jail. There are two Screws loose.

A PENNSYLVANIA editor speaks of the NEW YORK LEDGER as "a New York paper." It is *the* New York paper. It is the *definite article.*

AN Alabama editor, in a very swelling article, says there is but one being he fears. We suppose that is the "fool-killer."

A CONTEMPORARY of ours protests most earnestly that he is always as good as his word. No doubt he is, but his word is good for nothing.

An English paper, speaking of a very tall actor, says: "By Jove, he is tall enough to act in two pieces."

CURRENT ITEMS.

THE "Tampa (Fla.) Peninsular" proposes a Captain Simpkins, of the brig Governor Anderson, recently lying at that place, as the model go-ahead man of the age, as "he was down with yellow fever on Monday, attacked with the Asiatic cholera on Tuesday, dangerously ill with the small-pox on Wednesday, and transacted business in the city and prepared his vessel for sea on Thursday."

AN Ohio paper says that at the next session of the Legislature of that State a bill will be introduced prohibiting a clergyman from visiting a female member of his flock except in the presence of a third party. This measure is said to be set on foot by a few eminent clergymen who wish to save their profession from the possibility of scandal in this respect.

MARY CASTLETON, a beautiful girl of eighteen, living in Clinton county in this State, was not long since bitten by a pet dog. A short time afterwards the animal disappeared, and then the girl's parents became alarmed, and soon their worst fears were realized. Mary was seized with hydrophobia, and died after enduring unspeakable agonies.

A FINE boy of fourteen, named Herbert, living in Washington county, Penn., while attempting to disentangle his kite from the branches of a maple tree, in which it had lodged, lost his footing, fell to the ground, and was so terribly injured that he died in a few hours.

AN old man named Leonard Warbeck, living in Prince George's County, Virginia, was recently seized by a favorite horse that he was feeding in his stall, severely bitten, thrown down, and trampled to death before effectual assistance could be rendered him.

SHERMAN HINSDALE, a capenter, living in St. Joseph's county, Michigan, not long since accidentally cut off all the toes of his left foot with an adze. In a few hours his left side was smitten with paralysis, then ensued lockjaw, and then death.

A LITTLE lame girl was run over in Houston street a few days since, by a horse and buggy, driven furiously by a couple of fast young men. The poor child's arms and ribs were broken, and after suffering great agony for a couple of hours she died.

A SHORT time since, a returned Californian, named Nathan Scott, of North Adams, Mass., had some trouble with his wife, and stabbed her in five places, inflicting dangerous wounds. He then cut his own throat and died immediately.

LOUIS NAPOLEON has been heaping great favors on a certain American clergyman, who defended him against charges of debauchery and other bad conduct, while in this city many years since.

A FEW days ago an employee of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, named Hugh Maloy, lay down upon the roof of a car, fell asleep, rolled off, was run over by the train and crushed to a jelly.

A BOAT, containing three boys, was upset in the East River, a few evenings since, by coming in contact with a canal boat towed by a steam-tug, and none of them being rescued it was impossible to tell who they were.

THE Talladega (Miss.) Citizen gives an account of the recent marriage of a couple, whereof the bride was [illegible]ty-two, and the groom ninety-four years of age. They had not only arrived at, but passed the years of discretion.

IN Montgomery county, Texas, a boy thirteen years old, named Rossiter, being reproved harshly by his father, seized a rifle and shot him through the head, then fled from home, and has not been heard from since.

BARRY.

BY GEO. S. PHENTICE.

Lost Isabel, sigma I come
To linger and to weep
Above the spot where wild flowers spring,
Where thy pure form doth sleep.
And I stand beside thy grave,
Lone one, and I mourn for thee,
Gone are the sunny days of the wild
Sweet music of a bird!

The breezy step is seen no more
Upon the blue hill's brow,
And beauty's early light has left
My darkened day-dreams now;
Like that pale eastern flower
That shone at midnight with the rays
It drank in earth's first hour.

Thou wast the sunlight of my days,
The star of my dreams,
And now with thee was like the hope
Of summer's open season;
And it tramleth the storms of life
My spirit star was thou!
Thy love shone o'er the gathering gloom—
An angel of the cloud.

There is no star above my head,
No flower beneath my feet,
No gentle murmur on the air
Where winds and waters meet.
No liquid lull of twilight theme,
No song from field or grove,
But tells me of the pleasant paths
Where once we loved to rove.

Alas! the hours no longer roar
Thrilling with love's cares,
The gentle flowers look on their tears,
The stars their tears look down;
From all the boundless universe
The soul of joy is fled.
To live, ah! never, never more,
Since thou, sweet girl, art dead.

Dear Isabel, thou was the high
And lofty gift of Eve,
And beautiful as flashes played
Around thy glowing face
But it consumed thy heart, for there
No centered brightness lay,
And then art lost a thing of dust,
My own loved Isabel!

BION, THE WANDERER;

OR,

THE FAITHLESS GUARDIAN.

A STORY OF HOME, THE OCEAN, AND OTHER CLIMES.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.,

AUTHOR OF "ORION," "THE GOD-SEEKER," "THE ADVENTURES OF MORDECAI," "ALONZO, LORD OF ARLINGTON," ETC., ETC.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1877, by Mrs. Frances Ann Cobb, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

DISAPPOINTMENT.

Margery Grett arose in the morning and helped Black Peggy prepare breakfast, and when it was almost ready she went to the foot of the stairs to call Cora. She called a number of times, but there was no answer.

"She must sleep dreadful sound this mornin'," she muttered as she started to ascend the stairs. She gained the little bed-room, and had a sharp word of reproof upon her lips, when she saw the bed empty. She glanced quickly around, but no Cora was to be found. She looked under the bed, and in the closet, and was about to turn away to search elsewhere, when she saw a neatly folded note upon the table. She took it up and found it to be directed to herself. She knew her own name when she saw it written, and she knew the value of figures; but she could read no more. She opened the note, and found considerable writ ten there. The truth flashed upon her in a moment. She simply looked to see that the girl's garments were gone, and then she hastened down where, for the first time, she noticed that the outer door were unfastened.

Margery stopped not for her breakfast, but having informed Peggy that she should be back in a few minutes, she put on her hood, and went out.

At the head of one of the piers was a fruit-stall kept by an antiquated female who seemed to having seen better days. Her name was "Old Moll," as the "Beauties of Moll" at the Bulgich" which latter name was, in all probability her true one, if we substitute the divine name of *Mary* for the plebeian "Moll."

Moll was already in her stall, having just lighted her pipe, and wiped the dust of her features with an antique kerchief well plastered with prime old Scotch snuff; which snuff not only served to give the blushing fruit a fine polish, but also imparted a fragrance which pervaded to their very pulps. Margery, greatly admired. Margery was one of a very select circle of Indians friends of an equally quaint character, and as soon asshe approached the stall the little side door was opened, and our ne cient housekeeper was admitted into the inner room where there was just room enough for the two, the visitor occupying a space which had been cleared for a stove.

Old Moll was Margery's interpreter upon all such occasions as the present, and upon the latter had become seated she drew forth Cora's note.

"There, Moll—I want ye to read that for me." Moll reached up a hand of dark leather her left shoulder, and took therefrom a pair of iron-bowed spectacles, which she adjusted upon her nose, and then she opened the missive.

"Lawkes! Wet a delikit hand! Who writ it?"

"Don't ye see at the bottom? Don't it tell?"

"O—yes. Cora! Well, what—let's see!"

By dint of spelling out, and re-reading, and consulting each other, they arrived at the following solution, being something less than half an hour at the work :—

DEAR AND HONORED—I am going to leave you; but I cannot do it without telling you know why I go. From you I have received the kindest treatment, and I am sure I am honored I would be free from you; but because I would be with those to whom I know would love me. I know that I stay here I must be most sorrowing stranger. S I stay another week I must be given to take away never more. I am—who may take me off in a wild country, where I may be married like a lady, and never more have to work for my grown up maid. I know she, as I have chosen to have you call me, has been unkind to you sometimes, and to me. But I shall remember her with gratitude also, and I will always pray for you.

P. S.—Margery, you know you call me Cora, even Barney is dead I will let you name. When Barney saw to me Sun and myself I had that plan, it seemed natural. I conversation between yourself and a man who had called to see you. There was something somewhat set so effected that Moll could not make out even a letter of it. Gem but *Margery*—and when you called *Cornwood*!—and the for ed to let them know how much she knew, so she addressed it. This man seemed to have a power over you which even you could not overcome. He was going to give me away to a man who was going off West, so that I should never be heard from any more here. And now, dear Annty, I know you will not blame me. I should have been very sorry to run away from you, and have you with nobody to love; but I remain hear the thought of being torn from you and given away to a stranger, just as though I were a cat or a dog. You may tell the man who came to see you that I have gone a long way from the great city, where I shall have a good home. We may never meet again. If we do not, I do sincerely pray that God may bless you; and when you have breath of your fellow-men on earth, may you be taken to Heaven, and be pure and holy with the angels. I hope you will be very happy, and in very good. CORA."

"Well, now," uttered Moll, as she read the last word, and had made the scene complete, "that's a pretty letter. It's got the prettiest outin' I ever read. How complete she does tuck in the feelin bits a' feelin' about 'em!"

But Margery could not answer. For the first time in long, long years, she was actually crying.

MOLL BULLITT DECIPHERING CORA'S LETTER FOR MARGERY GRETT.

"I mean, how did she get off? With whom did she go?" She did not go alone. She says in here that she will have a good home. Now, where is she?

Margery Grett was very sure that Cora had gone off with Hem and Jack; but she was determined that this man should not find the poor little girl if she could help it. If she told of Hem, Greenwood might, in some way, find out where he had gone, and then God knew what he would do to the other—all for the sake of getting possession of Cora. To say nothing of the fact that she had promised to keep Hem's secret, and she would never be happy, and be very good.

"Cora."

"Well, now," uttered Moll, as she read the last word, and had made the scene complete, "that's a pretty letter. It's got the prettiest outin' I ever read. How complete she does tuck in the feelin bits a' feelin' about 'em!"

But Margery could not answer. For the first time in long, long years, she was actually crying.

Her heart was touched—deeply touched—and she fell sad and sorrowful.

"Don't any anything about this to anybody," she said, in broken accents, as she arose to go. "I'll explain it all to ye sometime."

Margery went to her home, and it seemed a dark solitude. The bright face was gone—the face that for thirteen long years had smiled upon her every morning—and to her heart she mourned. She had not dreamed how hard it would be to part with the child. It cost her a pang to lose Hem a year and a half before; but then she had one sweet face left; but now only Black Peggy remained.

And then Cora's simple letter had touched her heart-strings, and she could not help but feel sad and sorrowful.

"Now

When the services were ended, Christopher Huntley turned his eye for the first time upon that oldest grave. He started, and the first expression of true quickly gave place to a look of anger. An old woman was upon that grave. She looked old, for she was sun and wasted, and her hair was all waved. She was poorly clad, and as the cold wind swept over the place she shivered beneath its influence. Her eye met that of the rich merchant; but she did not speak. Her face was turned to say, she had a right to be there.

As the procession began to move away the merchant found an opportunity to ask the poor woman's side.

"Why are you here?" he asked, in a low, harsh whisper.

"Why are you here?" she returned.

"I came to bury my last child," he said.

"And I came to bury my first and last ever again," the woman responded. "If you remain quiet, I shall!"

There was much meaning in these words for Christopher Huntley to dare the woman further; so he turned away and rejoined his wife, and soon joined his carriage.

The great house seemed darker and more gloomy than ever now. The merchant sat down in his parlor, and when he was left alone he began to reflect upon the life he had led. He had gained wealth; he had gained position in society; and he had gained the name of a leading merchant. So much of his ambition had been answered. But what had he gained to offset this? Ah! how his soul quaked when he thought of it!

"What's the use?" he uttered to himself, starting from his seat, and striding up and down the long parlor with restless tread, as the soft carpet drank up the footfall. "Why should I bother myself about that now? I have got it, and what others have done I before me, and I know they lived as men should live. The boy died long ago! His! I'm glad of that. Had the Aldebaran been my own ship and the whole cargo mine, I'd never have given the loss an uneasy thought since he went to the bottom of the ocean with her! Bless it fend—dead and eaten by fishes! Pshaw! I'll have no hand in his death. He went to sea—went on others' go, and was swept off. It was his guardian—made so by law. And I am the legal heir to all the property! What have I to fear? Nothing!"

Awhile longer the merchant paced to and fro, and then he stopped near the center of the room. His head was clasped, and his eye was fixed on the floor.

"Why did he speak those words! *'If your hour as your, and your end is from you as?'* I think he said so. Those words will haunt me! What could have put them into his head?"

The merchant's reflections were cut short by the entrance of a servant, who handed him a visiting card. He took it, and read—BARNABAS LATIMER, Senior."

"Show him in," he said to the servant. And then, when he was alone, he added,

"Of I take the office of this man. I wish some kind fate would cut him off! He has lived long enough!"

At this point in his reflections the door was opened, and the attorney entered. He looked worse than ever. His face was sharper—his skin darker; his eyes more hooded—his cheek bones higher—his eyes more red and fiery—his voice cringy, yellow, and sparse; his fingers longer, more bony, and thirsty; and his clothes hung looser, as he wore eight years before.

"What I can do for you, sir?" the visitor asked, as he took a seat.

"What do you mean?" returned the merchant, trying to hide his disgust.

"Why—I was in your place down town to see you, and you was not there; so I came right on, as I see carriages driving from your door. I didn't know but ye was going a journey."

"I have just learned my last boy, sir. He died only three days ago."

"Why—I'd no idee that you had a sick—"

"Hush, sir. I have told you the simple fact, and there let it rest. Don't let me hear you say you feel like being sick."

"I don't mean to, sir. I don't blame ye at all," said Latimer; and then, having cast a something gaze over the large apartment, he added—

"I wouldn't have disturbed ye, here, only there's something turned up I thought ye'd like to hear."

"Ah! What is it?"

"Maybe ye know it, already, but I rather conclided ye didn't. Here I've been a-spending very peculiar lately—anything ye didn't expect?"

"No, no. What is it? I have heard of nothing. Let's have it at once, without any further preface."

"Have you heard from Blue Hen—— a—Hen Bernard, I mean? Have you heard from him lately?"

The merchant started to his feet in terror.

"What is it? speak!" he gasped.

"I asked you if you had heard from him lately."

"No. Have you?"

"Yes. Do he come home in the ship Good News?"

"No, no! You don't mean that, Latimer. Obe! Don't say that!"

"But I tell you it is so," persisted the attorney, complacently. "He is and a sailor-man was arrived from the wreck of the Aldebaran, and after all, many and quantity of hair-breath escapes they have got home safe."

"*Boy!* Blue Hen come back! O! why did not the sea swallow him?"

"He's here, sir."

"Here! Where?"

"I mean he has returned. But I think he has left the city now. He has made arrangements to wait in the Good News for the next voyage."

Mr. Huntley started across the parlor, and when he came back he was more calm.

"There may be no danger, after all," he said. "Of course the boy would not know me——"

"I am not so sure of that," quietly returned the attorney.

"Ha! What have you discovered? How did you know he had come?"

"I'll tell you, sir; old Black Peggy—the woman who lived with Margery Grant—came to me this morning and wished me to find her a place to work and live in. I told her if I could find a place I would. She then told me that Margery had broken up, and she would like to find her old comic back. He came with a man named Jack Wallace. She said they had both gone away, but she didn't know but what they would be back. Of the little girl that had been living with Margery so long. You remember the girl—one Ida Mont Blue's own age?"

"Yes—I remember her."

"Well. She disappeared on the same night that Blue and his mother left with the girl; and of course they were sure she went with them. I then went down to the ship, and by a roundabout method of inquiry I found that Blue and Wallace were both shipped for the coming voyage. That was all I could learn there, save to find out the name of the hotel at which the two stopped. I then went to the hotel, and there found that Blue Bernard and Jack Wallace were there over a week ago. I asked if they knew where the boy had gone, but they did not—only they knew that he and Wallace, with a little girl, took the Albany stage. I then asked the clerk if he knew the boy, and he speculated with any one in the city. He told me he didn't know; but he remembered that the boy made very particular inquiries for a wealthy merchant, named Christopher Huntley. He said the boy seemed to speak as though he was acquainted with Mr. Huntley, at the same time explaining that he did not know of the boy, and he said could perhaps find out something about him if Huntley knew him. The clerk said he remembered very distinctly that the boy was much offended while making the inquiries, and he seemed to be very anxious to know all about the merchant. So you can judge from that, sir, whether he remembers you?"

"But I can't understand it," said Huntley, with a frightened look and tone. "By the soul of me, but Margery must have told him something!"

"No, no," quickly replied Latimer, "I know better than that. The boy must have met your name in the papers; or, he may have heard it in connection with your name; for Margery and the name may have been familiar to him."

"But why should he seek me?"

"Perhaps in the hope that he might find a friend," answered Latimer with a meaning look. "But as all events, you can see the captain of the Good News. You can question him more appropriately than I can."

At this point Mrs. Huntley entered the parlor, and the attorney arose and bowed to her.

"I'll see you to-morrow," the merchant said. Barnabas Latimer bowed and glided out.

"Who is that man?" the wife asked, after the attorney had gone.

"He is a lawyer, my dear, who once did business for me. He has a curious look, but he is a shrewd, honorable man."

"I felt lonesome, my husband. Oh! we are there now—all alone!"

There was a double blow upon Christopher Huntley's head. He had the death of his first child an unsworn fact in his mind, and now his guardian—made so by law. And I am the legal heir to all the property! What have I to fear? Nothing!"

Awhile longer the merchant paced to and fro, and then he stopped near the center of the room. His head was clasped, and his eye was fixed on the floor.

"Why did he speak those words! *'If your hour as your, and your end is from you as?'* I think he said so. Those words will haunt me! What could have put them into his head?"

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"O—yes. Were you aware why he first went to sea?—or, rather, why he was sent?"

"Yes. He seemed sicrot on that point."

"Well—he was sent to sea on account of his inharmony. So I have been told."

"He was sent to sea much growing up in that way," said the captain. "But what's come here in the dispatches, generally sticks through life."

"You are right, Captain. And I think you had better keep this matter quiet. No one will be returns."

Perhaps he'd upon his tongue's end to ask the merchant how he knew that the boy had gone, but he concluded not to. He did not wish to let slip any of the real feelings he knew very well that he had a scoundrel to deal with.

"We progress on Tuesday, sir," he answered.

"Next Tuesday?"

"Yes, sir."

"Today is Friday. You will in one week from to-day?"

"If we can get our cargo stowed, sir."

"You have your crew, then?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well—suppose you send this boy, when he returns, to——"

Huntley hesitated.

"Where sir?" asked the captain.

"Why, to—to—to my house. Will he come directly to the ship?"

"I can't say, sir. I've known him first; but he will board at a hotel until we are ready to sail."

"Ah?" cried the merchant, with sudden relief "At what?"

"At the one from which the Albany stages start."

"Ah—thank you—thank you, sir. You need not mention to him that I have called. You will keep it to yourself."

"I shall be very careful."

"Good—good—good, day, sir. I have business to attend to, or I would stop longer. Good day, sir."

Captain Puffer said, "Good day," and Christopher Huntley left the room in haste.

"There goes a precious villain!" muttered the captain to himself, as his visitor departed. "But he knows me not. He had the same trick played on him before."

Puffer went on deck, and having seen that the stevedore would do all that should be done he turned up his coat collar, and then paraded with many of the heavy importing merchants, and also with several smaller bosses, having been engaged in the business of fitting out ships, or acting as commander of a ship. The first house he visited was the firm of Bernard & Ellerson. Both the owners were in their counting room, and Narrowgrin, the clerk, was also there. The latter was the man who had just buried another child. He has the luck of it, the fellow thought.

"I declare, Markpenny," said the senior partner, looking up from his writing, "Christopher Huntley has just buried another child. He has the luck of it, has Christopher Huntley."

"He does, surely," returned Markpenny. "It seems to have a strange turn that way. Who's the boy?"

"Who's this?" Why—Captain Puffer, as I'm a sinner! Alexander Puffer ow boy how are you?"

The three shook hands all around, and then seating himself near the senior partner—

"Let's see," said Markpenny, after chatting awhile, "you brought goods for Huntley?"

"Yes. All the crass was of the ship," returned Puffer.

"And you own a part?"

"Yes. I own one half."

"Ah—then you are just speaking of Christopher Huntley as you came in. He has buried his only child. Have you ever seen the boy?"

"Aye," added Narrowgrin; "and there's quite a little coincidence touching the affair. I have not seen the boy since he was a child, but you have seen him, and read the accounts of four deaths in Huntley's connected; but a little out notice of a boy that escaped to sea?"

"*Four?*" queried Puffer. "I thought you said one."

"Ah—I have children of his own. But don't you know that Huntley has had four sons to die?"

"No—I never heard," replied the captain, much struck by the fact that he had never heard of them without any effort on his part. "What is it?"

"Ah—he was a lucky dog. But I'll tell you. Huntley's first wife was a daughter to Chloe—a—a—a

AT LAST.

BY ALICE CARY.

Come and kiss me as you used to,
Kiss me fast, and kiss me long,
Death has brought him nearer to me—
You may come, and take your place!

Tired of all his wanted years
Made for your sake dearly dear,
Now he cannot see your face,
Or your right to weep for him.

With a soft and tender sigh,
From his chamber, gloom begirt;
Make his bed up sweet and white,
He will sleep a long, long while.

Earth was too cabined, too full
Of cold cruelties, for your pain;
Death was friendly, restful,
He is yours, all yours, at last.

MARGUERITE.

BY MARY W. STANLY GIBSON.

CHAPTER I.

"To be ordered here, there, and everywhere, as if I was a schoolboy—to be thwarted and advised and cheated, no matter what I undertake to do—and now, to be ordered down into the country, just at this time—and on such a fool's errand, too! I'll be blessed if I do it!"

"Eh—what's the matter, my dear fellow?" said a cheery voice at the door. Turning round, Arthur Stone saw his boon friend and companion, Ethelred Atherton, who had just returned from his bridal tour to Europe.

"Eden—my dear old boy—welcome home again!"

They shook hands most energetically, and the elder of the two then drew the younger into the studio.

"And how is Mrs. Saunders?" he asked, as Etherton threw himself down in an easy chair, and lit his cigar.

"Pshaw—she is well, I believe. I haven't seen her to-day, though. She doesn't rise very early when I'm out, and when I'm in the house she was still asleep—so her maid told me."

Arthur Stone followed with his eyes the clouds of cigar smoke that his friend was puffing into the air, and looked thoughtful.

"What's the matter?" asked Etherton, giving him a playful pinch. "What are you thinking about that makes you so sober?"

"Will you answer me a serious question seriously—Etherton?"

"Yes, if you like."

"Do it shall be then. Are you as happy with Julia as when you married her—and do you love her as well?"

"Don't take that cigar—I've burnt my mouth with it!" was the irrelevant reply. "Arthur sent the box."

He did so. And waited till a fresh cigar was selected, and lit.

"Now, then, Arthur?"

"Well, my boy," said Saunders, with a little sigh—"all men are liable to disappointments in this life, you know."

"Yes."

"Mine may not be the worst, still——"

"Still you are disappointed, Eddy?"

"Yes. I could not say as much to anybody but you, Arthur."

"Thank you for that." The two friends looked at each other kindly, and shook hands.

"I suppose no one ever realized his best and sweetest dreams." Etherton therefore went on to say. "Years ago, Arthur, when I was a college boy, I was engaged to a simple, little country girl—a sweet little maiden, with brown hair and hazy, loving gray eyes. She was a pearl, Arthur—I didn't know it then, but I have found it out now—and she had the cases of the pearl-Marguerite! My mother put a bar to the wearing of my life—God bless her!"

He studied in silence, and his eye looked dim.

"Well," said Arthur, eagerly.

"It was not 'well,' Arthur. As I grew up, I fancied my little country maiden was hardly ambitious enough for me. I knew she was poor. I grew hard, proud, and cold, and let her sow the change. She had the dignity of a queen, and our engagement was at an end. Then I came to congratulate myself when I was free. I fell in love with belle after belle—and at last I married, as you know, the most beautiful, fascinating and heartless woman in the world. She is a belle still, Arthur—but little everything. I am the only one but the husband. Well, she shall win through it somehow, I guess. Now, Arthur——"

"And Marguerite."

"What a sweet name it is! Marguerite, I am told, is now a beautiful girl. She is an heiress too—and highly educated and accomplished. I should not care to see her now—she is like all the rest of her sex, no doubt. But of the Marguerite of my youth—of my poor, dead Marguerite, my little know what thoughts I sometimes have of her!"

He threw his cigar away, and leaned his head upon his hand.

"Arthur—whatever you do—never marry a fashionable woman."

"I never will. Yet it is just what I am to be promised to do at present."

"By whom?"

"My uncle—General Stone—who has picked up some pergamon or other of a cousin of mine at a wedding festival, and wishes to unite them by tether. I hate marriages between cousins—and I won't go."

"Did you ever have a cousin, Tom?
Did your cousin happen to sing?
Sisters we have by my cousins, Tom,
But a cousin's a different thing."

sang Etherton, with a wicked smile.

"Don't laugh—but just hear what the old fellow says."

"My young friend is rich—beautiful—intellectual, artistic, and kind. If you don't come down here and marry her, at once, you ring, I'll cut you off with a shilling. She is an orphan for you've no occasion to know more than that as yet. Come down here at once—I shall expect you Tuesday, by the seven o'clock train. Our wood engraving of the head of my married for her money—we look out and not mention that. We have enough of your own, and when she—you will have more—so where's the use of your doing it. Her name—young lady from the South is here with her. My dear boy—I shall expect you Tuesday, and I know you would fail. Your affectionate uncle, Noll Stone."

"There's a pretty specimen of diplomacy for you!" exclaimed Saunders, when he had finished reading. "The old General would never make a Talleyrand, I am plainly. But, though clumsily and roughly left, Arthur, you may depend upon it, it is a man-trap still."

"I know it," was the rueful reply. "What would you advise me to do?"

"Keep out of it."

"But how?"

"Write to him that you have an attack of cholera or hydrophobia, and can't come."

"And have him posting here in the next express train to look after me! No—that will never do. I suppose I must go down this afternoon, and be still many a day to his paragon in spite of my teeth. I am the most helpless dog in the hands of woman-kind, Etherton, and I am flatly persuaded that I am making up her mind to have me—I shall yield at once."

"So am I," said his friend. "But I have one bright idea—your uncle says she is afraid of being married for her money. Now, if you could contrive to make her think you were after that—instead of her—how would that work—eh?"

"My dear boy—you are a second me! I'll do it so effectually that she will send me packing at once."

"That will do, then. No—don't thank me any more. You were getting into a habit of that—but go into the trap and lost his tail! We used to read it at school."

"I'm. And he tried to persuade all the rest to have their tails cut off—alleging that it was the fashion."

"Exactly. Well, Arthur, I have nothing of the fox about me. It may be the fashion for men to be disappointed and befooled as I have been—I dare say it is. But, however that may be—it is a fashion I don't want you to follow, my dear fellow—and so, take my advice—and not upon it."

"I will, you may depend upon it. But, Etherton, is there nothing that can make you and Julia happier?"

The young merchant shrugged his shoulders and smiled scornfully.

"Don't waste any sympathy on her, Arthur—while she has her diamonds, her carriage, her opera box, &c., she is contented. As it is, you will carry the pain at my heart—nothing less."

"I am sorry," Arthur began, but his friend cut him short with—

"Pshaw—there is no need of it. Go down into the country and enjoy yourself—don't let them entrap you before you know it—do you hear—and write to me the moment you arrive."

"I will."

"Good-bye, then. One word more: Arthur, if ever, in your wanderings, you chance upon a woman so fair and good and pure as the Marguerite of my boyhood one, set yourself to work and win her heart boldly and honestly and keep it when it is won, like the greatest treasure on earth—as I would have on earth. If you find her, marry her, if she will let you—if not, you will be lucky."

"I will, Etherton."

"Now, good-bye my dear boy. God bless you!"

He wrung his hand, and Arthur saw tears standing in his dark eyes. Were they brought there by the mention of his lost love?

"I will not ask or speak some comfort to you, Ethie," he said, softly, "But I don't know what to say."

"For the best of reasons, Arthur—there is nothing to say. There are no words that can console me. But, for God's sake, take warning by me, Arthur, and never strike upon the rock where I am shipwrecked."

He was gone, and Arthur sat soberly in the seat he had just vacated, thinking of him, and the fair Marguerite, whom name had power to influence and move the mind of the world even as it did his.

At seven o'clock that evening he alighted at the gate of his uncle's residence. The old general met him at the door, gave him an eager welcome, and hurried him off to make his toilet.

"Given you your room, you see," he said, as the servant brought up his nephew's valise, and left the apartment again. "The girls are down stairs, so hurry up, and we'll all have tea. You're a good boy for coming so soon—and as for Arthur—I'll also be glad to see the face of my brother's son."

"Eh, uncle—what are their names? You said there were two."

"Miss Adaline manners and Marguerite Clifton."

"Miss Adaline Manners! The baleful, I suppose."

"Eh—she's well worth the winning," said the general, with a droll smile. "I'll leave you now to dress—but don't be long about it, for I've set us in the old summer parlor, and tea is waiting."

He bustled out of the room, rubbing his hands, and chuckling to himself, and Arthur began his toilet, strangely confounding "Marguerite Clifton" and the "Marguerite" of Etherton Saunders in his thoughts. He took out a small locket from his toilet glass, as he turned to leave the room. His face looked pale, and his eyes dreamy as he arrested, and the light grand chain of his watch, was the perfect picture—as the dark, handsome, and fair noble, thoughtful face—his deep thus eyes, and luxuriant hair, burst and moustache of a many too, might well have given him favor in the eyes of a poet he sensual diminished with his appearance, and turned away impatiently, and went down stairs.

At the door of the parlor he paused. His uncle was reclining comfortably on the sofa, while a fairy like little creature, with golden curls and a pair of slingbits, was leaning over him, and trimming his cravat with great care. Arthur saw that dress was rich and elegant—a diamond ring sparkled on her left hand, while a diamond bracelet on her arm found arm.

"The falcon, doubtless," said Arthur to himself. As he stepped over the threshold of the door, her unclouded blue eyes were raised to his, and the work of decoration was suspended.

"What is it, Puss?" The old general sprang to his feet, when he saw his nephew, presenting the most singular spectacle with the red rose clinging to his breast.

"Come of our fooling," he said, coloring a little, as he saw the smile in Arthur's eyes. "Miss Adelie Manners—this is my nephew, Mr. Arthur Stone, of whom I have told you so often. Shake hands, and make friends with him at once, and don't go to being saucy or cool."

Thus admonished, the young lady held out her hand with a pretty smile.

"I trust we shall not quarrel, Cousin Arthur." She had the most musical voice, and the most engaging little ways imaginable. Had Arthur been a more impressible man, he would have fallen in love with her at once. As it was, he preserved his composure admirably, though he bent low over the little hand, and touched his lips lightly to it.

"There is no pledge of amity," he said, with a smile.

"Bravo!" cried the general.

"I'm sorry I am so cruel, Cousin Arthur," said the saucy little beauty. "But you must take the will for the deed."

"Dare I?"

She laughed, blushed, and turned away.

"Come, Arthur, don't be unmannered," said the general, quietly. "Here is another cousin I would like to introduce you to, when you can find time."

He stepped out on the piazza, followed by Arthur and Miss Manners. At the further end of the porch, a young lady, dressed simply in black silk, sat drawing.

"Marguerite—I have brought your Cousin Arthur to see you," was the somewhat unceremonious announcement of the general.

She rose, showing a tall, graceful, slender figure, and held out her hand.

"Mr. Cousin Arthur is very welcome."

"And I am most happy to greet my cousin Marguerite."

He did not kiss her hand—he held it a moment, and then relinquished it. She looked very pale, and the unassuming compliments he had at his tongue's end, were checked. She had straight and regular features—a serious—perhaps a proud face—a clear, dark, colorless complexion, such as we sometimes see in creole, crimson lips, and the blackest hair he had ever seen. She looked noble and queenly, and Arthur's quick eye saw it even in the crowned, for there was a deep sadness in the large, dark, gray eyes, fringed with long, black lashes. Those "bonny wells of eyes." They haunted him with their tragic glance. And the lines of the English poet came quickly to his mind—

"Oh sweet, pale Marguerite—
Oh rare, pale Marguerite—
What is your eyes with mortal power,
Like unto Heaven's sorrowful heaven?

More human is your mouth
Than your twin-sister, Adeline;
Your kiss is darker, and your eyes
Soaked with a somewhat darker tint—
And less crudely bish.
Ah, pale Marguerite, through the dew
Of misery—still sorrowful
Marguerite!"

"Come in, Arthur," shouted the general, from the parlor. And starting from his reverie, with a flush, he saw the laughing face of Miss Adelie, and a face upon him. Arthur bended his cousin in, and his uncle laughed, softly, as he sat down to the tempting tea table.

CHAPTER II.

It was evident enough to all of Arthur that he should devote himself to the young heiress. The General was constantly coupling their names together—Miss Adelaide—Miss Clifton echoed the avoid them, and the fair Adelie herself, was always putting her cousin in mind of something, with a look and attention with maidenly reserve pertinacity.

But there was no danger from her. He thought her pretty, good and pleasant, but he would as soon have thought of falling in love with a wax doll, as with her heart could go to them the eye of a lover of a graver man than himself. His cousin was very beautiful, and very fair to look upon, but he laughed, and frolicked, and jested with her, day after day, and her eyes often wandered, beyond a stately form of Marguerite, or studied her calm face in a way that would have interested any artist.

He rarely found an opportunity to speak with her alone. One morning, however, coming down to his toilet, he met her in the garden, and saw that she was dressed in a plain blouse and straw hat—and that her apartment might be empty. Her eyes were then supplied she looked and moved every way.

She answered his morning salutation, gave him a delicate letter rose he asked for, and went quietly on her walk.

"Shall I help you?" he asked, at last.

"If it pleases you," was the reply. "I have nearly finished."

"No—do not let me help. You little know what a gardener I am. My friend Etherton Saunders (my dearest friend, Miss Clifton, and one of the finest flower-growers I used to say) left me all my vocation—that nature designed me for that and nothing else. Now, I am a doctor."

"Here, beside me." As she pointed to it Arthur saw that her head trembled and she looked very pale.

"You are tired. Let me finish this for you."

"No—no. It will rest my heart and keep down my spirits." She answered, working with feverish haste. Arthur saw that she was ill, and Cousin Adaline, but don't touch this. Who did you say Etherton Saunders was to you?"

"A very good friend."

"Ah—I see. Etherton Saunders understands everything. You should know him, Cousin Marguerite—I wish you did."

"Why?"

"Because, I believe you might overlove him that he would be willing to bring about the separation from your sex."

She looked deeply, and her dark gray eyes were fixed a moment on the face with a searching look.

"Thank you for the compliment. But does your friend ever talk with you?"

"He has reason to," burst out Arthur, whose heart could not help it, at the girl's assertion's impudence. "His wife is a mere fashionable doll of the world, only refined by a little more than usual wit, and the light and flashes of which, and the perfect pearl inside—she is the most beautiful, thoughtful face—his deep thus eyes, and luxuriant hair, beard and moustache of a many too, might well have won him favor in the eyes of a poet he sensual diminished with his appearance, and turned away impatiently, and went down stairs.

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"Marguerite—I have brought your Cousin Arthur to see you," was the somewhat unceremonious announcement of the general.

"Because Adelie is rich he wants me to marry her. I cannot do it. I never can marry any woman I do not love, even if her gold would fill a palace."

"You are very right there, I suppose," said his cousin, stripping the leaves from the grape-vine by her side.

"So my friend Etherton told me."

"What did he say?"

"Shall I tell you?"

"Yes—if you will."

He told one of his best Marguerite, and bade me, if I ever found a woman so good, and fair, and true as she was by her, if I could, and keep her love as the most sacred thing on earth. With her for a wife, I could not fail to be happy."

Both were silent for a time.

"Marguerite," he continued, "I have found that I have spoken the same name—he has the same face. I always imagined Etherton's Marguerite had. I would ask her her age were if I dared to; I would ask to be admitted into that pure heart and cherished there;—but words fail me. Marguerite; tell me what I shall say to move that boon to compassion."

She rose from her seat now, and the light of love was shining in her serious dark gray eyes.

"Arthur—my cousin, Arthur," she said, in an unsteady voice. "If she should tell you that another had been admitted there before you—if she should confess that she had loved before, and that not lightly, but with the whole force of her nature—what would you say then?"

A sudden light flashed on the young man's face. He remembered the agitation she showed on being when he first mentioned Etherton's name, and the look that she gave him.

"You were to Marguerite?" he said, softly. She bowed her head.

"I am answered. Once having loved a man like him, you could never have a thought of me. I have been a fool—but you will forgive me, dear Marguerite."

"There is no answer. Over her averted face a rosy flush was stealing, and he could not make her look at him.

"Marguerite, Marguerite," he said, with hope and fear. "Dare I hope?... Can it be possible that you have forgotten him—that you love me?"

"I have forgotten him, and I love you," said the clear, low voice.

"Marguerite, my own Marguerite!"

He clasped her to his heart, and she did not reprove him; he kissed her, and his kiss was returned. Then, softly, and blind, he led down by his side, and leaned his head upon her shoulder.

"Now, Marguerite, you must forgive me, my guardian," he murmured.

"I have been deceived you in one thing," she answered; as she bent fondly over him. "I wanted to see and judge you for myself unnoticed, and I was unable Adaline put the part of the heiress, while I kept in the back ground. You have been deceived, though, at once, and I am to be proper self again."

"Do you love really Marguerite Clifton? You have not changed your name with your part?"

"Always Marguerite Clifton to you, Arthur."

"And you believe Marguerite Clifton to be?" he said, with a smile that made her blush, and drop her eyes in confusion.

He drew the proud head nearer, with a fond gesture. What was it to him that she had gold and gold, so that she was his, by her own free will and consent? He sighed once when he thought of Etherton, and the sorrow he should have to look on him; but love is all engrossing, and with the next kiss he had completely befriended the shortcomings of destiny of his friend was for awhile forgotten.

The general was in his glory. It had been the work of years of his heart to see his favorite nephew the husband of Marguerite, and when that young gentleman informed him of the probability of his speedy accomplishment of that wish, he chuckled.

"Didn't want to marry an heiress, her?" he exclaimed. "Arthur a sly puss you are, sir. Thought you'd show your pluck, and marry a poor girl? Didn't think your old uncle knew which side his bread, or pussy, was buttered? How do you think now, sir? And what amends are you going to make for your fickle love, for having broken her heart into fifty pieces, while you were flirting with your cousin? Eh—you don't marry Puss, and the funniest way I ever heard—to court one woman, and marry another. When I was a young man, Adlie, we did things differently, and if I found out your cousin Marguerite, I should have told her so, and married her, and left you to Puss and Pussy!"

Miss Adlie shook her fairies curls disdainfully.

"No love but, uncle," she affirmed. "I don't marry Arthur any more than he wanted me. If you don't believe me, look here." And she produced a small locket from her neck, and held it out to them.

"What's this, Midget? A lock of your kitten's hair?"

"No," was the petilsh reply. "It's my intended husband's picture."

The dignified announcement was received with a shout of laughter from her uncle and Arthur. Miss Adlie looked very much offended.

"Sir him to playing cat's cradle, Midget, when he comes? Why, uncle, you must be blind or blindness's self; but, at your peril, do you let me catch you making love yet selish. Do you hear, Miss? Have you no sense of decorated husband? Oh, that's a good one, for a little two-headed girl that can't even cradle the other day!" And as Miss Adelie brushed by him in offended dignity, he caught her back in his embrace and laughed till the house rang again.

Preparations for the wedding went merrily on. Even Miss Adlie forgave Arthur, though her self-assumed he would not come. But at the wedding sight, and when the sorrow of the guests had already assembled, a note was given him by a servant from his friend. It ran thus:

"I am within five moments' walk of you, and shall see you before you are married. I will not ask you to breathe any three words, but, from whose memories as you have found her. And as you did not wish her, so may you be happy.

ETHERTON SAUNDERS."

He showed it to Marguerite.

She read it to the end, gave it back to him, and said:

"You have no regrets, love?" he asked.

"Not one."

They went down the stairs together, and entered the summer parlor. A white-haired clergyman, who had been Arthur's tutor in his college days, rose up as they advanced, and the group around him drew back. A few low words, a simple prayer, a heartfelt blessing, and the two were made one for life.

And Etherton. Where was he?

As the crowd thronged around to offer their congratulations, a tall, handsome man stepped up and grasped Arthur's hand. It was he. But, even then few words, he looked changed, and seemed haggler and sadder.

"Marguerite," he said, in a low voice, as she looked around, "it all forgiven?"

"All, and forgotten also," she said, with a beautiful smile.

He sighed—a look of pain flashed across his face as her familiar voice fell upon his ear.

"God bless you both!" he murmured, hoarsely.

He bent down—his lips touched those of Marguerite once again, and with a thousand memories of the past in his heart, he exchanged a hasty farewell with Arthur, and went from the room. Marguerite looked after him and sighed.

"Poor Etherton," she said, in a soft tone, heard-long over her.

"Not one—believe me—except for him," was the earnest answer. "But I do hope and pray he may be happy—as we are!"

"Amen!" murmured her husband.

Vain hope! Before they returned from their bridal tour, the papers were flinging with his name. His heartless, giddy wife, had profited by his brief absence to flee, with her child, from his home, under the protection of a man, who had long been her professed admirer—and the injured husband sought in vain to overtake the guilty pair, and bring them back. Without all his evil passions thoroughly aroused, he followed on their track—but the action in a duel—rescued his child, and, leaving the false wife to sport with her new love in foreign court, came back to America once more. There, after long and anxious delay, he wrote once more to Arthur—not a letter, married man.

"I am glad you are happy. With Marguerite you could not be otherwise. I am glad for the world has not contained the promise of Margaret."

"I am glad that your heart beats not. A little time—and I shall be with you. Marguerite will welcome me, and my child, affectionately, wherever I may. She loves her father with a filial love—and he is trying to make himself more worthy of that innocent affection. My child may serve me as a guardian angel, Arthur—and I believe it will. Pray for me, and for me, and for me, and

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

MOON OF THE SEA.

BY MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY.

I saw the sweeping moon look meekly forth,
When the hoarse thunder pealed o'er their vesper hymn,
And the wild tempest rent the pine's dark form,
With mirror radiance, fathomed as now.

But nothing high, in majesty and wrath,
And closer shutting o'er her quaint heel,
Profoundest veil for her future calm.
A sullen cloud, its gathering blackness spread;

Yet, all unheeded, in the infinite space,
Fast by her side, with check serenely pale,
A tender, trusty, pure-eyed star was set,
Like faithful Selfhood, that all else should fail!

And hath one constant friend, the darkest cloud may drive.
WATTS-HALL, St. I., Aug. 30, 1869.

THE SHOEMAKER'S DAUGHTER;

OR,

CASTE IN LACEYVILLE.

BY MARY G. VAUGHAN.

Leonor Hastings and Arthur Lacey were the children of neighbors—neighbors so far as cottages was concerned, but not in the sense of kindliness of feeling and deed. General Lacey was the village magnate—the founder of Laceyville, with stores, and factories, and dwellings, in his possession, and a fine, large stone house, with ample and elegantly arranged grounds, for his residence on Tribby—there for Tribulation—Tribby Hastings was the Laceyville shoemaker, and the little, brown, clapboarded cottage, beneath whose roof he and his family dwelt, stood directly on the line of those gardens the windows of the little brown cottage looked; and Tribby was wont to say that he had eaten as much bread of their grain as any grocer. The rich perfume of the flowers floated through his low rooms—the hum of the bees came soft and murmuringly to his ears on dewy summer afternoons—the weight of the fruit bent and cut of the depths of General Lacey's trees, were as sweet to the poor shoemaker, who at times played a lively accompaniment upon the violin, as to the rich man, who took not half the pleasure in them that he did in counting the number of his acres, and estimating the value of his back stock.

Tribby's wife was not half so philosophical as her husband. She was a feeble little woman, shrilly and sentimental, and greatly addicted to tenderdelicity and novel reading. Leonor was an only child, and her somewhat uncommon name was drawn from the pages of the latest novel which her mother could prevalence to the period of her christening. Tribby, who was a staff of Tribulation, and had a hankering after Puritan names, would fain have bestowed upon the child the mother's appellation of Prudence, but this ill-assorted pair came near having their first and only quarrel over the designated name, but, Tribby, finally, in compassion to his wife's feeble health, announced his acquiescence in Leonor, provided that he made a mental reservation at the time it not known, but enrolls it is that when he presented the baby for baptism, having the privilege, as the clergyman's ear, she was baptized by the name of Leonor Patience.

Mrs Hastings seemed until she was exhausted, after their return home, but she was forced to acquiesce—"orange flowers and satin" of her fancies' visions, should figure as bride—and Arthur Lacey should be the happy bridegroom, and continually flanked before her eyes. To Tribby, sensible, straightforward Tribby, Leonor she was massed had always been incomprehensible—now he had not pretend to understand it. He was content to say as his inclination, and plied his awl as composedly as if he had not a lovely daughter of sixteen, and a son of one-and-twenty in the shiri-sleeves, smoking his clay-pipe just as he had done before Mrs. Hastings had assigned her position in society. Twenty times a day, Mrs. Hastings declared in the presence of her husband that she saw no means to so stupid a husband, or one so determined to stand in his own light, and ruin the prospects of his child.

Meanwhile it did not appear that the young lawyer was aware of the fact that Leonor she could or seems as dishabille upon the porch. He came and went, and spoke and looked as he had done before, often stealing away from a parlor-full of Laceyville beauties to chat with the shoemaker's daughter. Mrs Lacey to be the "dearest old lady," whom it was delightful to visit; to sit by Leonor's side, reading books which Leonor's mother became only less sole, perhaps, more than their own; or chatting with the old lady herself.

Mrs. Hastings's manœuvres were so little heeded, as her good husband's sister almighty, Leonor had seemed to belong to him from her childhood—that she was to be his wife, one day, he never had questioned, and the fact of her being so indefinitely more than all beside which the while was dear to him, Mrs. Hastings's shrewd eye failing for a proposal in form, and expecting to see the young couple fall at her feet, and receive the blessing after the fashion of the love-makers of her favorite novels, was doomed to continual disappointment, and the disappointment of the whole upon her that the hot poor Tribby a terrible life, and rendered the attendance on the wonted meals with tears and doleful breathings.

Whether this state of mind so affected her feeble frame as to produce disease, or whether the "time appointed for her to die," had arrived without any immediate cause, the autumn of the two Hastings suddenly sickened, and after a few days of anxiety and suffering she breathed her life out calmly. They laid her beneath the green sod of the village burial-place, and when the slow, silling days had passed, the loneliness in the household by all but her husband and child.

Tribulation Hastings from for the first time in his peaceful life did not belie his name. He mourned for his invalid wife, bewailed her with abiding sorrow, missing her presence in the low-roofed cottage, at the head of his table, and in the chair on the other side of the fire-place, and the first lady of the land, instead of a querulous invalid who would, for ever since, have harassed the life out of a man less constitutionally placid, became the mistress of his sole hope and comfort.

But Leonor, alas, was a sincere mourner. We often wonder when we behold the grief that follows the departure of a person who have been lovely in their lives, and are astonished that those who have borne most from their faults and frailties in life, should seem sincerely to mourn their loss. But we forget the power of habit, and the constant association often makes annoyances maddens of course, and blunts the sensitiveness which they at first wounded.

It was Arthur's task to comfort the motherless girl, and there, for the first time, he framed into words the hopes and desires of years—that had long since grown into the settled purpose of manhood. Leonor had nothing to oppose to his pleadings, except the loneliness of her father who demanded her society and care; for, to spend her life with Arthur, who had been her best beloved friend in Lacey, was the greatest happiness which she was capable of comprehending. So, to have sent Arthur away, to leave her and his father, in such words would, would have been her greatest sorrow.

Of course there was no chance of disapproval from Tribby, for whatever would make Leonor happy he must applaud. But when Arthur ventured to lay his plans before his parents he was met by the sternest opposition, the hardest to him, inasmuch as it was totally unexpected, for no re-

sistentions had ever been laid upon his association with the pleasures of his childhood, even after she had grown up into the loveliest girl in all Lacey village.

To a more worldly nature this opposition would have aimed quite natural, and would have been met by a vigorous preparation for consequences. General Lacey was very rich, and his only son might claim a wife from among the daughters of wealth and luxury. They had never looked upon his attentions to Leonor Hastings as likely to culminate in marriage—she was his pet, his playthings—pretty little girl, of a station so much beneath his own as to render the idea of making her his wife one too ingenuable to deserve a moment's thought.

General Lacey stormed and fumed, and Mrs. Lacey wept, and besought, but Arthur was firm—Leonor his choice was made—wealth and station were worthless trifles when the beauty and grace of Leonor and her loving heart were priceless to the young lover.

In the midst of the stormy conversation that followed the first avowal of his hopes, Leonor's father, wearing a mug that he had brought home, was heard. Looking out the open glass door of the library he saw Leonor upon the window of the little brown house, directly opposite, from her father's shop, and reading the song which seemed the fittest expression of the joy of her heart, she decked the cage of her pet canary, hanging beside the open door of the little parlor.

A very beautiful picture she made, in the gauzy white dress which was the style of the period, and in her complexion, as she stood there, framed in the small casement. Arthur drew his parents to his side and bade them look upon the fair, graceful girl whom he desired to present to them as a bride—and he pleaded for her that she might be worth, but both equally drunk from the thought that they were to be the parents of the beautiful creature—to the daughter of the village cobbler, Tribby Hastings. The old man's agreement, upon the instrument of the evening. Any reputable person wishing to join in the singing-school can, with the consent of a nearly welcome. The fee is usually regulated by the circumstances of the pupil—higher where the parents are so many as eight hundred persons are present at one of these meetings, and the profits in the hands of a teacher after paying all expenses, have often amounted to upwards of a thousand dollars. Those who have not the means would do well to take a hint from the foolish in this respect, and not be ashamed to learn to sing, and to secure the advantages by their wealthier brethren.

Mrs. Lacey's heart willingly opened its doors to the lady of her son's choice, and many fears for success, in the social positions would have any claim upon her affection and respect, but Arthur's mother was a woman of the world, and said aside that she hope we all on once answer these questions, "Is it necessary?" "Is it right?" "Is it true?" "Is it wise?" "Is it kind?" "Is it pure?" "Is it just?" "Is it honorable?" "Is it lovely?" "Is it of good report?" "Is it virtuous?" "Is it worthy of praise?" If we can say Yes to all or most of these questions concerning any thing, we may be sure it is not wrong for a young lady to correspond in a friendly manner with a young gentleman, and the fact of the correspondence could have any valid claim upon her affection and respect, or could in any way influence her future life. Such a query has no business to exist. If a correspondence could have any valid claim upon her affection and respect, or could in any way influence her future life, it would be such a query that no true lover would hesitate to answer. If he did not answer it, he would have no true lover